



SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE

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SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE

A

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

"LIBERTIN"

BY

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TO MY MOTHER
FANNY MONCURE MARBURG

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INTRODUCTION

AS Macaulay observed of the elegant and graceful Sir William Temple, Ambassador to The Hague in the service of King Charles the Second, he was “. . . a man of the world among men of letters, a man of letters among men of the world. Mere scholars were dazzled by the Ambassador, and Cabinet councillor; mere politicians by the Essayist and Historian.”¹

Not wishing to be found among Macaulay's “mere scholars,” we must, at the risk of being a little dazzled, rehearse for a moment the circumstances which turned this fêted “man of the world”² into the secluded “man of letters.”³

I.

IN January of 1681, the news came to Temple—then quietly enjoying the air, the water, and the fruits of Sheen, his country estate—that his name had been crossed off the list of privy councilors of Charles II. He immediately sent his son to London to tell the King who had treated him so casually that he intended to pass the remainder of his life “like as good a private subject as any he had, but never more to meddle with any public employment.”⁴

Curiously enough Temple held to his resolution. For Charles had wounded his pride once too often. This exquisite ambassador, who, to the surprise of all Europe, had brought about the signing of the Triple Alliance with such pomp and pageantry in 1668, probably did not forget that he had been recalled two years later without explanation, only to discover—not from Charles, who would talk to him of nothing more serious than the roughness of the English Channel—that the King was even at the time of the signing of the treaty in the pay of Louis XIV. “And thus an adventure has ended in smোক, which had for almost three years made so much noise in the world,”⁵ Temple wrote to his father on that occasion.

Charles, who appreciated Temple's international reputation for honesty and dispatch, twice offered him the Secretaryship of State, once in 1674 and again in 1679, but each time Temple

refused, contenting himself with delivering a very moral lecture to the King, to which Charles listened with his usual good humor. Now that Charles had dealt this second blow to the pride of the man who had negotiated the peace between England and Holland, who had been instrumental in bringing about the marriage of William and Mary, and who had only two years before been associated with the effort to reorganize the Privy Council, there seemed, to Temple at least, no answer other than quiet but final withdrawal. For, as Bishop Burnet remarked, "Temple was too proud to bear contempt, or forget such injury soon. He was a vain man, much blown up in his own conceit."⁶ And being also an honest man he was unable to cope with the particular form of politics which flourished in the court of Charles II. "I found the arts of a court were contrary to the frankness and openness of my nature," he wrote in his *Memoirs* referring to this episode, "and the constraints of public business too great for the liberty of my humour and my life. . . . I knew very well the arts of a court are, to talk the present language, to serve the present turn, and to follow the present humour of the Prince, whatever it is: of all these I found myself so incapable, that I could not talk a language I did not mean, nor serve a turn I did not like, nor follow any man's humour wholly against my own. . . ."⁷

Therefore Temple persisted in his determination to give up London in favor of the "sweetness and satisfaction" of Sheen, and took pleasure in boasting that since his withdrawal from public duties he had passed five years at his country estate without ever once going to London, though he could almost see it from his garden, and though his town house was always ready to receive him. "Nor has this been any sort of affectation," he added, not quite convincingly, "but a mere want of desire or humour to make so small a remove."⁸

Temple, proud, disillusioned, and unfailingly charming, preferred the "Chair of private Tranquillity"⁹ to the rougher dangers of the politician in the court of Charles II.

. . . since his Majesty has thought fit to change the course of his councils. . . . I have had no share at all in public affairs; but, on the contrary, I am wholly sunk in my gardening, and the quiet of a private life; which I thank God, agrees with me as well as the splendor of the world.¹⁰

At Sheen he remained until 1684 with the two clever women, his wife, Dorothy Osborne, and his sister, Lady Giffard, whose solicitous flattery protected him during the greater part of his life. Here, in his library, he casually reread the classical authors whom, during his two years at Cambridge, he had loved a little less than his game of tennis; here he conversed with his friends in his ample garden; and here he tended his orangery and wall fruit, which seemed to Evelyn, his friend and fellow essayist, “. . . the most exquisite nailed and trained, far better than ever I noted it.”¹¹ For Temple found that “. . . the fruits of my garden have another taste than those of my closet, and will preserve better than those of my embassies.”¹²

In 1684, at the marriage of his only son, John, Temple made over Sheen to him, and removed himself and his household to More Park, a retreat in Surrey even more remote from London than was his former home, with a garden even more elaborate. More Park, surrounded by forests, secured Temple from the world, except for that portion of it which chose to seek him out. Though William of Orange visited Temple shortly after his arrival in England in 1688, and urged upon him the position of Secretary of State, he smilingly declined, not being able quite to forget his disappointment over the failure of the Triple Alliance and his chagrin at his dismissal from the Privy Council; not being willing to forgo the subtle pleasure of the philosophic observer of other struggling men. The “man, in public affairs, is like one at sea; never in his own disposal, but in that of winds and tides.”¹³ With such moral contemplations Temple passed his time among his plums and apricots, until his death in 1699, when, at his request, his heart was buried in a silver box, “six foot under ground on the South East side of the stone dyal in my little garden at More Park.”¹⁴

It was clearly as one who had tried to get on with the world and failed, that our “man of the world” turned into a “man of letters.”¹⁵ It was during the years between 1685 and 1690 that he wrote the most significant of his *Miscellanea*, those which appeared in Part II in 1690. Not until Temple had experienced the sudden rise and fall in the world which finally led him to repudiate all political ambitions did he make use of the essay, as all true sons of Montaigne must, in order to discover himself. His “Essay upon the Present State and Settlement of Ire-

land," his "Survey of the Constitutions and Interests of the Empire," his "Essay upon the Original and Nature of Government," all of which had appeared, before his retirement, in Part I of the *Miscellanea* (1680), were spirited analyses of political and social questions; they certainly would not lead one to identify Temple with the little group of experimenters in the new form of writing suggested by Montaigne.

It was during this decade, between 1680 and 1690, when Temple was looking more closely into himself, relating all the ideas and suggestions that came his way to his own sense of reality—in short, when Temple was turning into a genuine writer of essays—that he was also engaged upon the compiling of his *Memoirs*, which must have kept his mind painfully aware of his unfortunate political career, and thus enhanced the introspective essay mood. What he felt during these quiet years as he rehearsed again the earlier scenes, one can only guess. We know that he threw the first part of his *Memoirs* into the fire before his death, that only a pirated copy of the second part appeared during his life, and that Lady Giffard never forgave Swift for publishing the third part after Temple's death. The bitterness which Temple carried away with him from the court of Charles he tried to leave unexpressed, but it is this very feeling of wounded pride and disgust with the world which forms the background of the polished essays of this somewhat weary dilettante. Direct expressions of Temple's sense of failure break through the surface of his prose, however, even in his later days, after the *Memoirs* are complete.

And thus I have done with these idle political visions [he wrote at the end of his essay "Of Popular Discontents"], and, at the same time, with all public thoughts as well as employments: very sorry that the speculations of my mind, or the actions of my life, have been of no greater service to my country, which no man, I am sure, has loved better, or esteemed more; though my own temper, and the distempers of our nation, prevailed with me to leave their service sooner than perhaps was either necessary for me, or common with other men.¹⁶

Such proud and measured phrases must have been a comfort to this sensitive, and, let us admit it, pompous seventeenth-century gentleman, who had overreached himself politically and who spent the rest of his life building up his shattered ego.

II.

It is, then, as a disillusioned diplomat turned moralizer that we must begin a study of Temple the "man of letters." For to consider Temple, the popular writer of polite essays, only as the pompous "scholar" who precipitated the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns in England is to misunderstand the complex of ideas and attitudes from which his comments on the quarrel emerged. Perhaps because Temple's mind, indolent and inconsistent as it was, is difficult to understand; perhaps because Temple has, in our day, lost the prestige which might invite one to make the effort to interpret him, contemporary scholars are content to think of him as a defender of the lost cause of the "ancients" and nothing more.

Spingarn, indeed, in his Introduction to *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 1908), presented the suggestion that Temple, who provoked this discussion, though he cannot be said to uphold the moderns,

. . . is equally inadequate as a representative of the "ancients"; despite his nominal leadership on this side, his tastes were markedly modern, and he represents . . . a trend of criticism in complete opposition to ancient rules.¹⁷

This interpretation has never been developed by those who since Spingarn's remark have considered Temple's position in the argument. Spingarn indicated his connection with the "moderns" when he identified Temple with what he called the "school of taste," which conceived of literature as changing rather than static, and considered it in relation to man's environment. Temple, and other "moderns" of this virtuoso spirit, appealed to taste and sentiment rather than reason, and looked upon arbitrary rules as limitations not to be borne. Temple's critical method "cannot be dismissed with the complacent dogmatism of Macaulay,"¹⁸ Spingarn pointed out. His comments on the English theater, and English humor, his interest in Scandinavian and oriental poetry, his historical insight and the taste which prompted him to object to the conceits of his day all entitled him to more consideration as a critic of the new school of thought. Dryden had suggested the idea that "taste" might be the criterion of criticism, "but in Temple himself this new standard moves harmoniously for the first time in English."¹⁹

In spite of this interpretation of Temple's relation to the quarrel, H. Gillot in *La Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes en France* (Paris, 1914) repeats the attitude toward Temple expressed by H. Rigault in his *Histoire de la Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* (Paris, 1856), passing him over as the charming and inaccurate writer of English prose that he is traditionally supposed to be. C. S. Duncan in *The New Science and English Literature in the Classical Period* (University of Chicago, 1913), damns Temple in a few sentences: "all in all, his [Temple's] discussion is unfair, prejudiced, and superficial."²⁰ A. E. Burlingame, in *The Battle of the Books in Its Historical Setting* (New York, 1920), sees the quarrel as a rebellion against accepted law, and an adventure of spirit into liberty—an adventure in which Temple took no part. The quarrel was a struggle resulting from the effort of the New Philosophy to extend the recently developed scientific methods to a more vigorous criticism of classical literature. In England the controversy began with the argument of Glanvill and Stubbe, and it culminated in the *Battle of the Books*. Temple's attitude toward this effort to crawl from under the weight of antiquity seems to Miss Burlingame as ineffectual as that of the medieval schoolman. Temple's remarks, she says,

. . . exactly express the view of the old schoolman who held classical poetry as a kind of religion, and who regarded it with the same veneration that the mediaeval man did the Bible. Its content was beyond criticism and must not be impugned. To approach it lightly was sacrilege. In its mysterious depths one found the fountain of "races" and "the sciences" of all the succeeding ages. This two-fold attitude—worship and credulity, and the sweeping of opinion into large waves of emotion without accuracy of thought—completely represents the temper of the intellectual era that was passing. Temple gracefully sings its swan song.²¹

R. F. Jones, in *The Background of the "Battle of the Books"* (Washington University Studies, 1920), also accepts the hypothesis that Temple was an "ancient," and then proceeds to give a new turn to the interpretation of Temple's connection with the quarrel. Jones demonstrates that the quarrel in England was scientific and philosophical, rather than literary and artistic in nature. He enlarges upon the three stages of the struggle—(1) *The Controversy over the Decay of Nature with*

Goodman and Hakewill as the chief opponents; (2) *The Controversy over the Royal Society*, with Sprat and Glanvill against Stubbe; (3) *The Controversy over the Ancients and Moderns*, with Temple and Boyle against Wotton and Bentley. He sees the relation of the three acts of the drama, and, to fit Temple into the scene, emphasizes all the remarks of Temple which have any connection with the Royal Society or with science directly, about which Temple was hopelessly ignorant, and omits Temple's ideas on moral philosophy, on the meaning of civilization, on literature, which after all have something to do with this complex quarrel involving every field of thought.

It is clear that the modern critics, with the exception of Spingarn, who have attempted to analyze Temple's attitude toward the Quarrel between the Ancients and the Moderns, have not come much nearer an understanding of him as a "man of letters," than did the still more casual critics of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, who saw in him only a writer of polished essays.

And, indeed, when one puts out of one's mind all that has been written of Temple and reads his *Miscellanea*, one is impressed by the variety and inconsistency of his thought, and begins to understand why it has long been considered sufficient to put him down as an "ancient," without further argument. For it soon becomes apparent that neither his remarks on science nor those on literature, isolated from the rest of his thought, are an index of his relation to the quarrel, since he was interested primarily in "moral philosophy," in man's understanding of himself and his fellows. One's thoughts on Temple become still more confused when one realizes that, though unsympathetic with the "natural philosophy" of his day, he followed with absorbed attention the undigested material pouring into England—much of it by way of the Royal Society—on remote lands, and attempted to work out for himself on the basis of his reading a conception of the movements of civilizations which would vindicate his notion of "moral philosophy." His attitude toward literature, one finally realizes, emerged from his idea of what man essentially is, and from his newly formulated theory of what civilization means.

The intent of this study, then, is to look into Temple's "moral philosophy," his notion, as an amateur student of history, of

racial cultures, his literary beliefs and prejudices, not separately but in relation to each other and in relation to the thought of his time, with the hope that in the end something of Temple's engagingly responsive mind will emerge. His thinking in these three directions will often appear confused and inconsistent. Like so many men of his time who were trying to formulate an attitude toward a world which was being transformed by scientists and explorers, he will sometimes seem to hold tenaciously to the old, and will sometimes suggest the new with startling freshness. For Temple was an individual, who must be seen not exclusively as a "man of the world," nor even as a "man of letters," but rather as an inquiring, impressionable, not very profound mind, trying to find a place for itself in the shifting seventeenth-century world of thought.

The material for the following essay was presented as a doctoral dissertation at the University of Chicago in 1929. I should like to thank Dr. R. S. Crane, under whom I worked, for the care with which he has read and criticized this study.

CHAPTER I

THE MORAL PHILOSOPHER

I.

ONE cannot but see in Temple's retreat at the early age of fifty-two a real break in the life of this high-minded and rather naïve statesman, who, surrounded by honor and ceremony, had learned to consider himself with the utmost gravity. Temple, indeed, looked upon his retirement as a turning point in his life. He wrote to his son in the Introduction of his *Memoirs*:

All the rest of my age before, and since that period, I have taken no more notice of what passed upon the public scene, than an old man uses to do of what is acted on a theater, where he gets as easy a seat as he can, entertains himself with what passes upon the stage, not caring who the actors are, or what the plot, nor whether he goes out before the play be done.¹

Finding himself at one moment the most fêted diplomat of Europe, and at the next nothing more than a respected name which Charles wished to use only as a cover, Temple was far too much of a gentleman ever publicly to utter his objections. Instead he nursed his grievance, and became, at best, a garden philosopher, and, at worst, a domestic tyrant.

For that Temple, in his private life, was not always the self-contained courtier, one gathers from his admiring sister's well-meaning *Character of Sir William Temple*, written in 1690, and published, together with her *Life of Temple* in 1728,² after having been generously expurgated by an unknown editor, who did not feel that the world should be told that Sir William was uneven in his moods, somewhat tyrannical in his domestic relations, rather sensuous in his pleasures, and inclined to be lazy as he grew older. His "passions," she wrote, before the editor's careful eye censored her phrases, were

naturally warme & quick, but temper'd by reason & thought, *giving liberty only to those he did not thinke worth the care & pains it must cost to restrain them.* His humor gay, but a great deal unequal, some-

times by cruel fitts of spleen and melancholy, often upon great dampings in the weather, but most from the cross & surprising turns in his business, & cruel disappointments he met with soe often in (what nobody ever had more at heart) the contributing to the honour & service of his country; wch he thought himselfe two or three times so near compassing he could not think with patience of what had hindered it, nor of those that he thought had been the occasion of it. *He grew lazy & easier in his humor as he grew older.*³

Temple had a very pleasant way of conversing with all sorts of people, Lady Giffard tells us, "from the greatest Princes to the meanest servant, to children whose imperfect language & natural & innocent way of talking he was fond off."⁴ But he was subject to strong aversions, so that he was "uneasy at the first sight of some he disliked, and impatient of their conversation." He was apt to grow warm in "disputes & expostulations wch made him hate the first, & avoy'd the other."⁵

*As he never did injuries soe he was very hard to bear them from any man, & not less to receive obligations unless from those he loved & esteem'd. I have seen him upon the most inconsiderable presents, never quiet till he had found out something of greater value to return them with: but was pleas'd with the least y^t could be made him from his friends.*⁶

Moody, supersensitive, quick to take offense, Temple certainly was. One can easily understand the reference made to him years later by his former secretary, Jonathan Swift, in a letter to Hester Johnson:

Don't you remember how I used to be in pain when Sir William Temple would look cold and out of humour for three or four days, and I used to suspect a hundred reasons?⁷

Fortunately Temple was able to control his unstable temperament to some extent at least by a whole series of virtuoso pleasures—all reference to which his editor crossed out of Lady Giffard's account of her brother, as too trivial perhaps to be mentioned in connection with so great a man. He was fond of music, "seldome without it in his famely"; bought as many pictures and statues as his moderate fortune would permit; loved above all else the conversation of a few choice friends, and "scenes he had made pleasant about him in his garden &

House." After he gave up tennis, riding and walking were his favorite exercises, and when gout made these impossible, he "pass'd much of his time in aireing in his coach that was not spent in his closet."⁸ Temple's editor at least tried to conceal from posterity the fact that several of these pleasures went a little beyond the limit set by a philosopher.

If he ever was inclin'd to excess 'twas in fruits, wch by his care & aplication he was alwayes furnis[h]'d with the best of from his owne gardens. He lov'd the tast of good wines & those best y^t were least kind to him, and drunke them constantly though never above three or four glasses, thought life not worth the care many were at to preserve it, 'twas not what we eat or dranke, but excess in either that was dangerous. He naturally loved play & and very deep, but without any aplication & by reckoning his losses several years found himselfe every one of them so considerably a looser, he resolv'd to give it quite over.⁹

Lady Giffard's picture of Temple after his retirement is that of a sociable, yet tyrannical, man, affectionate with his family and friends, but sensitive to slights, absorbed by his fruit trees, his gout, and his household affairs, given to minor excesses, and sudden fits of "the spleen," extremely sensible to smells and air, to the arrangement of his garden and his closet. Her *Character* makes one realize that Temple was schooling himself as well as his reader when he gave in his essays sage advice about "reason" and "the passions." He escaped to his "little corner at Sheen," to his solicitous family, to his garden and his books that he might find peace after a busy, and finally, as it seemed to him, quite futile public life. "In retreat," he reflected, "a man feels more how life passes."¹⁰ By meditating in one's garden, by conversing with one's intimates, by reading over one's books, by attempting to express one's own reality in essays, one achieves, perhaps, a more secure sense of the permanent beneath the shifting illusion.

And so I take leave of all those airy visions, which have so long busied my head about mending the world; and at the same time of all those shining toys or follies that employ the thoughts of busy men; and shall turn mine wholly to mend myself.¹¹

The thoughts which emerge from the efforts of this suave, and if one might suggest it, indolent garden philosopher, to

mend himself, are subtly suggested by casual remarks scattered through the essays. They are only suggested, for Temple was far too urbane ever to underline his precepts. All that he did insist upon with any conviction was that happiness is our aim, that if we would achieve happiness we must live according to "nature," the exact meaning of which phrase Temple gracefully refused to define.

Certainly one could not look to the so-called "natural philosophers," the scientists of the day, for light. No,—our hope of happiness lay in our knowledge of the "moral" nature of man. Had not Solomon long ago pointed out the superiority of moral to natural philosophy? Socrates, too, scorned natural philosophy, and introduced moral philosophy in its place "to busy human minds to better purpose."¹² Marcus Antonius, too, in his discussion of natural philosophy, asserted that "the knowledge of such things is not our game," that they may "serve to amuse and weary us, but will never be hunted down."¹³ To an apostle of the art of living, such as Temple, the ambitious claims of the defenders of "natural philosophy" seemed both naïve and presumptuous. With a languid wave of the hand, Temple asked his reader, what can the "new philosophy" which had gained ground in this part of the world during the last fifty years say for itself? "What has been produced for the use, benefit, or pleasure of mankind, by all the airy speculations. . . ."¹⁴ "I have indeed heard of wondrous pretentions and visions of men," he continued, with a fine swell of scorn, "possessed with notions of the strange advancement of learning and sciences, on foot in this age, and the progress they are like to make in the next . . .," such as the universal medicine; the philosopher's stone; the transfusion of blood into the veins of old men, "which will make them as gamesome as the lambs, from which 'tis to be derived"; a universal language to be used when men have forgotten their own; a knowledge of other's thoughts, "without the grievous trouble of speaking"; the power to fly; "the admirable virtues of that noble and necessary juice called spittle, which will come to be sold, and very cheap, in the apothecaries shops"; the exploration of the planets, and voyages to be made between our world and the moon as often as between York and London.¹⁵ Bacon, Temple admired as a "great wit," but Copernicus, Descartes, Hobbes, and

Harvey all came in for his scorn, though he admitted that they were "ingenius." "There is nothing new in Astronomy," he said, "to vie with the ancients unless it be the Copernican system; nor in Physic, unless Harvey's circulation of the blood."¹⁶ But whether these be recent discoveries, or "derived from old fountains" is a question: indeed, it is a question whether they are true or not, for though they sound reasonable enough "yet sense can very hardly allow them." Even if they are true, what difference have they made to astronomers or physicians? They have, we must conclude, "been of little use to the world, though perhaps of much honor to the authors."¹⁷ Again, in his essay, "Of Health and Long Life," this unshakable skeptic reiterated his comment on Harvey, who gave rise ". . . to the opinion about the circulation of the blood, which was expected to bring in great and general innovations into the noble practice of physics; but have had no such effect," perhaps because "sense and experience" have not well agreed with reason and speculation.¹⁸ Natural philosophy is of small use to men in their pursuit of happiness, for what theory postulates is seldom in harmony with what practice teaches. Because of Temple's belief in experience as opposed to theory he was moved to decline the invitation from Gresham College to write an account of his efforts to cure his gout with "moxa." Temple was highly flattered by this proposal, and, indeed, tempted to join the band of natural philosophers. However, he tells us, rather smugly, he excused himself,

as having too much business at that time, and at all times caring little to appear in public. I had another reason to decline it, that ever used to go far with me upon all new inventions or experiments, which is, that the best trial of them is by time, and observing whether they live or no; and that one or two trials can pretend to make no rule, no more than one swallow a summer, and so before I told my story to more than my friends, I had a mind to make more trials myself, or see them made by other people as wise as I had been.¹⁹

Though Temple kept an amused and not wholly unsympathetic eye upon the efforts of the virtuosi of Gresham College and the Royal Society to uncover the secrets of nature, and though he read with smiling attention the reports of their experiments, he, as a moral philosopher, was occasionally moved to wrath by the attempts to push inquiry beyond the limits of

our human minds. Such attempts were but manifestations of pride, and pride is "the ground of most passions and most frenzies."²⁰ "We are born to grovel upon the earth," Temple asserted with an eloquence reminiscent of that of Jeremy Taylor—

We are born to grovel upon the earth, and we would fain soar up to the skies We cannot comprehend the growth of a kernel or seed, the frame of an ant or bee; we are amazed at the wisdom of the one and industry of the other; and yet we will know the substance, the figure, the courses, the influences of all these glorious, celestial bodies, and the end for which they were made: we pretend to give a clear account of how thunder and lightning (that great artillery of God Almighty) is produced, and we cannot comprehend how the voice of a man is framed, that poor little noise we make every time we speak.

Astronomers say they understand the motion of the sun and the earth, "yet we none of us know which of them moves," and it is "beyond the fathom of human reason or comprehension" ever to discover. We do not even know what motion is, "nor how a stone moves from our hand, when we throw it across the street." The divine writer who said "Vain Man would fain be wise when he is born like a wild ass's colt" understood the limits of our human comprehension.

But, God be thanked, his pride is greater than his ignorance; and what he wants in knowledge, he supplies by sufficiency. When he looks about him as far as he can, he concludes there is no more to be seen; when he is at the end of his line, he is at the bottom of the ocean. . . .

Man makes his individual reason the measure of truth; his own understanding the measure of what is possible in nature. Though man's mind as well as his body changes every seven years, and his point of view every day, he is confident nevertheless that "his present thoughts and conclusions are just and true, and cannot be deceived. . . ."²¹ It is pride which moves the scientists and the theorizers to overstep the obvious bounds to thought set by our own physical limitations. Temple's quarrel with the moderns, his "just indignation at the insolence of the modern advocates"²² was, in a sense, an expression of horror at the arrogance of the ignorant who were drunk with the idea of the limitless possibilities of man's power to understand.

Our reading of the ancients, thought Temple, instead of showing us "the imbecility of human understanding, the incomprehension even of things about us, as well as those above,"²³ leads us only to absurd presumption and vain ostentation of our little store of knowledge. Such are the proud thoughts with which this scorner of pride waved aside the significant scientific thought of his day.

"The best philosophy," asserts this moralizer with enviable assurance, is not that of the scientists at all. It is something far simpler, far more graceful. It is "that which is natural to men, disposed to succeed in it, by their natural tempers, though improved by education, learning and thought."²⁴ And by success he meant the achievement of happiness. This is the end of all our struggles, both private and public, "The end of all wisdom happiness: in private, of one's own life; in public affairs, of the government":²⁵ "The good of wisdom, as it most conduces to happiness."²⁶ But happiness is internal, and therefore not to be exactly defined. "A man's happiness, all in his opinion of himself and other things."²⁷ It is a "satisfaction within"²⁸ of which the world cannot judge: "A fool [is] happier in thinking well of himself than a wise man in others thinking well of him."²⁹

Temple observed, after perusing the books which lined his "closet," that all philosophers agreed—and he with them—that happiness "was the chief good and ought to be the ultimate end of man." Yet the next question, ". . . in what his happiness consisted?"³⁰ was not so easy for the ancient philosophers, nor for Temple, with all his gentle indolence, to solve. In musing over the differences between the Stoics and the Epicureans in his essay "Upon the Gardens of Epicurus," Temple did, in fact, propose the paradox with which he was constantly struggling. Can one live the life of reason, or does reason itself make men restless and discontented? Is "reason" contrary to "nature"? Must one therefore give way to one's impulses, and let the "passions," gently controlled, lead one to happiness?

Temple never quite resolved this controversy in his mind. Probably the members of his household were well aware of the difference in the days when passion held sway and when reason was in control. At all events, this polarity between reason and passion, mind and body, control and freedom, the cold and the

hot temperament was constantly in Temple's thoughts, subtle appraiser of life's possibilities as he was, and found expression when he spoke of matters quite apart from moral philosophy. Your garden, for instance, should be regular, but if you were daring, it might be altogether irregular, after the Chinese manner;⁸¹ in conversation be discreet and guarded, but "a little vein of folly or whim"⁸² is exceedingly pleasant; drinking may impair men's powers if they are of "warm constitutions," but it may, on the other hand, improve those of "cold complexions," "rouse sleepy thought and refine grosser imaginations."⁸³ In analyzing character, Temple serenely rested upon the division of all men into two classes, those who were controlled, and those who were not, the difference between one man and another being "only whether a man governs his passions, or his passions him."⁸⁴

When Temple's thoughts were turned more directly to "moral philosophy," the same subtle interrelation of these two extremes was constantly present to him. The contention between the Stoics and the Epicureans grew warm as to the way to gain happiness, he said in his essay "Upon the Gardens of Epicurus," and in stating the contention voiced the controversy at the root of his own thinking. The Stoics believed in virtue, the Epicureans in pleasure. Yet "the most reasonable of the Stoics made the pleasure of virtue to be the greatest happiness; and the best of the Epicureans made the greatest pleasure to consist in virtue";⁸⁵ and so the difference between these two sects is difficult to discover. "All agree," he continued, giving one the impression that he too subscribed to this sober belief, "the greatest temper, if not the total subduing of passion, and exercise of reason, to be the state of the greatest felicity; to live without desires or fears, or those perturbations of mind and thought, which passions raise. . . ."⁸⁶ And so on, for the remainder of a rhythmical paragraph, in the course of which Temple wound himself to a pitch of enthusiasm for the life of reason, and then—perhaps being visited by a fleeting vision of the flowers and the books and the wines, which made a day pleasant for him—turned about in his track and said, with some impatience, "This at least was the profession of many rigid Stoics," who seemed to conclude simply, "that a man to be wise should not be a man."⁸⁷ The Epicureans, on the other hand,

were more intelligent in their idea, and more happy in their expression when they placed a man's greatest good in peace of mind and ease of body, "for, while we are composed of both, I doubt both must have a share in the good or ill we feel."³⁸ Temple's flowers and books and wines being thus restored to him by this more genial thought, his mind was, for the moment, tranquil.

But he frequently returned to the thought that, with care, one might indeed live the life of reason. He defined goodness as that which ". . . makes men prefer their duty and their promise, before their passions, or their interest . . .,"³⁹ and called "Coolness of temper and blood, and consequently of desires, the great principle of all virtue."⁴⁰ When he exhorted the Countess of Essex in the famous letter to that lady, to moderate her grief over the loss of her little daughter, he gravely reproved her "desperate melancholy." "For God's sake, Madame, give me leave to tell you"⁴¹—all the usual banalities about the duties of submission. In the endless search for happiness, he finally concluded, leaving the religious comforts aside and falling into his more habitual moral musing—in the endless search for happiness the sensual man pursues every pleasure which presents itself without considering the pain or the weariness of the chase; the ambitious man is after power or wealth; the meditative man wants peace of mind before "the different motions of passion and appetite," but all men have agreed that the passions "ought to be our servants, and not our masters; to give us some agitation for entertainment or exercise, but never to throw our reason out of its seat."⁴²

In his private moments, when he could be more candid than when writing to a countess, the life of reason appeared to Temple hardly possible, "Every man will be happy; and none, by the constitution of nature, is capable of being so,"⁴³ he jotted down in the "Heads Designed for an Essay upon the Different Conditions of Life and Fortune," which Swift collected and published after Temple's death. "We are capable of few pleasures; and reason and reflexion cut off many of those," is another of these agitated thoughts which must have troubled Temple's peace of mind. Reason itself makes men restless; how ironic that reason must again be called in "to allay those disorders which itself had raised, to cure its own wounds. . . ."⁴⁴

The source of all immorality is this "restlessness in men's minds to be something they are not, and have something they have not. . . ."⁴⁵ Reason, which gives men control of the rest of creation, is also the root of all human suffering, subjecting men to more miseries, "or at least disquiets of life than any of its fellow creatures."

. . . 'Tis this furnishes us with such variety of passions, and consequently of wants and desires, that none other feels, and these followed by infinite designs and endless pursuits, and improved by that restlessness of thought which is natural to most men, give him a condition of life suitable to that of his birth; so that, as he alone is born crying, he lives complaining and dies disappointed.⁴⁶

Reason is the "thorn that ever grows with a rose." Unsatisfied with what we at the moment enjoy, always looking backward or forward, haunted by fears, regrets, unattainable desires, we corrupt "the pleasures of our senses and of our imaginations, the enjoyments of our fortunes, or the best production of our reason,"⁴⁷ and thereby our happiness. Reason, itself, then, as a guide to happiness is an illusion, since it creates in men's minds still more wants and desires, a restlessness and discontent, which no amount of further reasoning can allay. It is useless to exhort men to live by reason, because they cannot; nor does much talking help matters. Whatever wisdom and prudence we have grows from "that little grain of intellect or good sense, which men bring with them into the world."⁴⁸ Though education and conversation and experience in the world might improve it or ruin it, it cannot "go beyond the reach of its native force";⁴⁹ ". . . truth seems much in one's blood";⁵⁰ we are what we are; all of us born to suffering because we are "reasonable."

How, then, to achieve happiness, seems an irrelevant question, since both one's passions and one's reason lead to sure disaster. But Temple believed in happiness; he did not intend, if he could arrange it otherwise, to be undone by either the mind or the body. He believed in an art of living, a way of playing off our impulses, one against another, which makes at least for a certain kind of happiness. Since nothing in this world comes unmixed, he wrote, "so men should temper these passions one with another; according to what by age or condition, they

are most subject.”⁵¹ Whether long life is worth the trouble is, indeed, a question, but it is nevertheless certain that “in life, as in wine, he, that will drink it good, must not draw it to the dregs.”⁵² Not to pursue anything beyond a certain limit; not even to think that ultimate happiness is possible; to be content with the satisfaction, which, with skill, one can extract from life—and to remember that all flights of spirit have a material basis. Poetry itself, though by many called divine, Temple will not allow, “to be more divine in its effects than in its causes, nor any operations produced by it to be more than purely natural. . . .”⁵³ All of our thought and impressions depend on the state of our bodies. It does not require much thought and observation, he said in his essay “Of Health and Long Life,” to perceive that ill health makes the pleasures of sense impossible:

Let philosophers reason and differ about the chief good or happiness of man; let them find it where they can and place it where they please; but there is no mistake so gross, or opinion so impertinent (how common soever) as to think pleasures arise from what is without us, rather than from what is within; from the impression given us of objects, rather than from the disposition of the organs that receive them.⁵⁴

As “the sound of the same breath passing through an oaten pipe, a flute or a trumpet,” varies, so our sensory impressions appear quite different, according to our age, our temperament and our state of health.⁵⁵ Whatever one might say as to the meaning of happiness, it is certain that our daily pleasures depend upon the state of the body, and that to enjoy them one must be well, “as the vessel must be sound to have your wine sweet; for otherwise, let it be never so pleasant and so generous, it loses the taste; and pour it never so much, it all turns sour, and were better let alone.”⁵⁶ Music grows meaningless, conversation dull, riches are useless, and “crowns themselves are a burden” without health.

Temple showed his appreciation of the material basis of happiness, when, as a young man “in some idle company,” it was suggested that each should make three wishes. His were “health, and peace, and fair weather,” and, he added prettily,

they are all of a strain for health in the body is like peace in the state and serenity in the air: the sun, in our climate at least, has

something so reviving, that a fair day is a kind of sensual pleasure, and, of all others, the most innocent.⁵⁷

Since we cannot escape from the pursuit of the passions, nor from the burden of thought, there is no way out, as far as Temple could see, but that we should divert ourselves as well as we might, and "whether that be brought about by drink or play, by love or business, or by some diversion as idle as this, it is all a case."⁵⁸ But to be really diverted one must be in good health, which is difficult enough to attain to, since we are all born to "a poor, needy, uncertain life."

. . . the imaginations of the witty and the wise have been perpetually busied to find out the ways how to revive it with pleasure, or relieve it with diversions; how to compose it with ease and settle it with safety.⁵⁹

Why should not we, then, with our limited wit and wisdom seek the kind of happiness set forth by the moralists of all ages, smiling tolerantly upon the "airy visions" of the presumptuous "natural philosophers"?

II.

ALL Temple had to do, if his faith in "moral philosophy" ever wavered, was to shut himself in his book-lined closet, and peruse the ancient authors, which he had glanced over with such a careless eye many years before at Cambridge. Not only these respected writers, but the polite men of the world, who still passed through his drawing rooms, expressed a scorn of those who pursued thought at the expense of the more humane graces—a scorn related, more or less closely, to the current of skepticism, to which the scientists themselves contributed, running through this age when so much faith was placed in the power of men to "reason."

As to the classical authors, most of the brown leather volumes of the ancients, which Temple assures us he loved, told him that, indeed, "truth lieth covered and hidden in the depth," and that it is no concern of ours, since "whatsoever should make us better or more blessed, nature hath either laid open before us, or near unto us."⁶⁰ Aristotle, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, Socrates, and Epicurus, all of whose moral

precepts were read, dissected, and assimilated by Temple and his contemporaries, expressed this conception of the importance of the study of man. If indeed action is the end of speculation, said Epicurus, according to Charleton's version, and our knowledge of nature only the way to self-knowledge, and the most essential part of man's knowledge that which makes him understand how to regulate his mind, and therefore his actions, so that he might at last attain the highest happiness, "then, certainly, must Ethicks or Moral Philosophy be the noblest of all Human Learning, the Crown and Perfection of our studies."⁶¹ Winchester, one of the numerous sons of Montaigne who peopled the seventeenth century, spoke for all of his brother humanists when he wrote, "The ende why men ought to studie is to learne to live well: for there is no truer science in man than to knowe how to order his life well."⁶² Cornwallis, another of the busy essayists whose wisdom is now forgotten, wins our sympathy by observing that the study of many books made him none the wiser:

Time goeth, and I turne leaves, yet still finde myselfe in the state of ignorance; wherefore I have thought better of honesty than knowledge. . . . I will chuse rather to be an honest man, than a good Logitian.⁶³

Books, remote from daily life, lead one on to a kind of "busy idleness," and provoke a vain curiosity. Bryskett, in his wordy way, said that the study of law, physic, and divinity were all inadequate, and that he proposed, having gathered up himself into a small compass, "as a snail into his shell," to read only such books as would direct him on the path of virtue, especially to read moral philosophy.

But the opinion of the polished men of the world, who felt that assiduous study made a man an unsocial person, pedantic, proud, immoderate in his curiosity, graceless in his bearing, must have affected Temple's way of viewing learning even more profoundly than that expressed on every hand by those who filled their leisure by giving moral advice to their fellows. The picture of the well-mannered man, who carried his learning with a certain easy negligence, had probably never been completely forgotten since Aristotle's description of the "High-minded Man."⁶⁴ But it was seventeenth-century France, which

polished up the notion of the *honnête homme* familiar to Temple, who read and wrote French with pleasing grace, and who—judging by the self-conscious impatience he expressed in his *Memoirs* at the elaborate ceremony of the French ministers—thoroughly enjoyed the business of being a courtly gentleman. Temple at the age of nineteen gave up his studies at Cambridge in favor of the “grand tour.” During the years between 1665 and 1676 he exchanged courtesies and thoughts with the diplomats, wits, philosophers, and beauties of The Hague, then a center of cultural as well as diplomatic interest. He, therefore, could not but succumb to the feeling, expressed by Molière, Boileau, Saint-Évremond, and many others, that morose and pedantic study was not designed for a gentleman; could not but share the scorn for

Un pédant, enivré de sa vaine science,
Tout hérissé de grec, tout bouffi d'arrogance.⁶⁵

But besides the humanist's preference for “moral philosophy,” and the *honnête homme's* abhorrence of the too aspiring thinker, both of which attitudes affected the sensitive mind of Temple, there was in the seventeenth century a strong current of philosophical skepticism, of which he must have been more or less aware, in spite of the forests surrounding More Park. The scientists themselves, with whom Temple felt himself to be completely out of sympathy, contributed to this skepticism, caused by the deepening realization that man is caught in a vast material universe, of which only a few of the laws are understood. Bacon, perfectly aware that “. . . by far the greatest hindrance and aberration of the human understanding proceeds from the dulness, incompetency, and deception of the senses,”⁶⁶ nevertheless held out the hope that the errors of sense might be corrected at last by the help of the new mechanical instruments which were making objective experiments possible. To uncover this objective reality was the ardent wish of the scientists who followed Bacon. Galileo, however, was the first of the seventeenth-century scientists clearly to make a distinction between primary and secondary qualities, between those which can be measured quantitatively and are therefore “real,” and those which are qualitative and therefore dependent on the illusion of sense impression. Descartes, Hobbes, Boyle, Glan-

vill, Newton, and the others accepted this distinction between the objective and unchangeable, and the subjective and fluctuating. The aim, then, of the scientific mind came to be that, by means of mathematics, it should read itself out of the world, leaving the universe, as far as possible, devoid of sound, color, smell, taste, heat or cold, which are only sensations separating the mind, whose language is number, from the real universe. Hobbes, expressing this idea, suggested, nevertheless, the dilemma involved when we ask our senses, the only source of our materials for thought, to correct the impressions they themselves have presented:

. . . whatsoever accidents or qualities our senses make us think there be in the world, they be not there, but are seeming and apparitions only; the things that really are in the world without us are those motions by which these seemings are caused. And this is the great deception of sense, which also is to be by sense corrected.⁶⁷

In other words, the scientists announced that reality lay outside of man, and was independent of his senses, but that man was capable of perceiving only by means of his senses. The "condition of the soul in this life, or the infirmities resulting from its state of union with a gross and mortal body"⁶⁸ is Boyle's expression of the dilemma which Descartes, Glanvill, Locke, and all the other seventeenth-century scientists apprehended.

But the "Cambridge Platonists," that group of scientific theologians who flourished at Cambridge between 1648 and 1655, had still other grounds for opposing the materialistic scientist. They refused to think of "that vast Machine the Universe" apart from a spirit interfusing it. Ralph Cudworth, the most systematic writer of the Cambridge group, spent his life combating Hobbes's explanation of the world in terms of motion, and his *True Intellectual System of the Universe* remains a monument to the arguments of the Cambridge Platonists against Hobbes's philosophy. Cudworth's belief in the reality of a divine Intelligence and a spiritual world was augmented by his skepticism as to man's power, through his senses, to understand reality. He trusted, instead, to a power of "Intellection and Knowledge," "superior to Sense, that is, not Relative or Phantastical, but that judges what Really and Absolutely *Is*

and *Is not*."⁶⁹ Temple, the "onetime nursling and eternally devoted servant" of his "good mother the University of Cambridge,"⁷⁰ studied under Cudworth from his sixteenth to his eighteenth year (1644-46). Casual as his attention to his tutor was, he must have heard the talk of this humanist against Hobbes, and "the dry systemmatical way of those times."⁷¹ The older Temple shared the Cambridge Platonists' mistrust of the scientist's hope that "the senses, helped and guarded by a certain process of correction,"⁷² might perceive reality. He was, however, too much of an *honnête homme* to join them in their mystical belief in "being incorporeal," which he could no more credit, than he could share the scientists' faith in the power of the mind to escape from the body and understand the world. Instead he repudiated the thought offered him by both groups, finding in their arguments as to how man is to know the universe only further support for the idea that he is not going to know it at all.

This is the view seized upon by the brotherhood of *libertins* from the time of Montaigne to that of Temple, a view which Bacon recognized as one of those against which those who believed in science would have to struggle.

Moreover the philosophy which is now in vogue embraces and cherishes certain tenets, the purpose of which (if it be diligently examined) is to persuade men that nothing difficult, nothing by which nature may be commanded and subdued, can be expected from art or human labor. . . .⁷³

One has but to read Ecclesiastes, Saint Paul, Solomon, Socrates, and Plato to realize that a part of the human mind has always been saying to the other part, "vanity, vanity, all is vanity." "For wise and serious men are wont in these matters to be altogether distrustful," observed Bacon, "considering with themselves the obscurity of nature, the shortness of life, the deceitfulness of the senses, the weakness of the judgment, the difficulty of experiment and the like. . . ."⁷⁴ But to Montaigne, the possibility of perceiving the objective world when all of our perceptions come to us through our senses, was more than doubtful. In his "Apologie de Raimond Sebond," he, with wicked pleasure, enlarged upon the uncertainty of our senses, which so often master our reason. Since we cannot depend on

our senses to settle our disputes, he mused with mock solemnity, we must call upon our reason. But every reason must rest on still another reason, and so on back to infinity.

. . . toute cognoissance s'achemine en nous par les sens; ce sont nos maistres. . . . La science commence par eux, et se resout en eux.⁷⁵

Charron, too, looked upon the human mind as a labyrinth, because of the falsity of the senses, through which all knowledge comes to us, and which must remain, therefore, the beginning and end of all we know. Cornwallis presented the same quandary in his essay, "Of Knowledge,"⁷⁶ and Bulstrode observed that

. . . in this Life we are faign to peep into the World thro' the close Windows of our Senses, which are so darkened with the Dust of our Senses our Passions raise, besides the natural Dulness of our Compositions, that we are faign to use the Opticks of our Philosophy to help our Sight: Yet after all we are still pur-blind, and so are like to be during this mortal Life.⁷⁷

Sir Thomas Browne considered one of the sources of "vulgar errors" to be the fact that man submits his conclusions "unto the fallacies of sense, and is unable to rectify the Error of its Sensation." Man having but "one eye of Sense and Reason"⁷⁸ therefore struggles on in hopeless confusion. Nourse, pondering the same dilemma, concluded that

. . . the Soul of Man is confin'd to the Body as to a close Chamber or Prison, from whence it happens, that though it be capable in its own Nature, of knowing all things within the compass or Sphere of Creatures, yet it falls out, that whilst it is in this State of Confinement, all the informations it can receive of what's transacted in Nature, is conveyed to it by these narrow Passages or Casements of the Senses.⁷⁹

To Pascal's passionately logical mind it seemed that the very source of the human tragedy lay in the fact that we are composed "de deux natures opposées et de divers genre, d'âme et de corps"⁸⁰ which "s'abuse réciproquement l'un l'autre."⁸¹ "Notre âme est jetée dans le corps, où elle trouve nombre, temps, dimensions. Elle raisonne là dessus, et appelle cela nature, nécessité et ne peut croire autre chose."⁸² Therefore

L'homme est à lui-même le plus prodigieux objet de la nature: car il ne peut concevoir ce que c'est que corps, et encore moins ce que c'est qu'esprit, et moins qu'aucune chose comme un corps peut être uni avec un esprit.⁸³

It was on the basis of such thinking as this that Saint-Évremond, the elegant and smiling skeptic so popular in the salons and coffeehouses of Holland and England, could retreat behind an urbane pyrrhonism and say, with a shrug:

Nous vivons au milieu d'une infinité de biens et de maux, avec des sens capables d'être touchés des uns, et blessés des autres; sans tant de philosophie, un peu de raison nous fera goûter les biens, aussi délicieusement qu'il est possible, et nous accomoder aux maux, aussi patiemment que nous le pouvons.⁸⁴

Let us not spoil the little there is to enjoy in this life by too much thought. For after all, what can we ever know? Montaigne's "que sais-je?," the very basis of Saint-Évremond's thought, was left reverberating in Temple's mind by this exquisite *libre penseur*, when he finally retired from the worldly world.

Perhaps it was this mistrust of the ultimate power of the mind, a mistrust expressed, indeed, by the classical philosophers, by the *honnête homme*, by the Cambridge Platonist, as well as by the brotherhood of *libertins*, which moved Bishop Burnet to say of Temple, "He was a corrupter of all that came near him . . . he delivered himself up wholly to study, ease and pleasure."⁸⁵ For Temple, sharing the *libertins* disbelief in the efficacy of rational thought, shared also—discreetly enough—the *libertins* interpretation of the *summum bonum*. For that undefined but very significant "brotherhood" included in its number not only such austere philosophic skeptics as Pascal, but also such gay and reckless worldlings as Rochester, who did not hesitate to translate the current doubts as to the possibility of achieving truth into the further thought, "Let us then enjoy."

One suspects that Temple, whom Bishop Burnet quite rightly observed "was an Epicurean both in principle and practice,"⁸⁶ had learned from the *libertins* to enjoy a certain freedom of thought and action which did not mark either the strict rationalists or the philosophic Platonists of his day. From his

"Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands," written in 1672 in the midst of his ambassadorial duties at The Hague, one gathers that it is the freedom to think what one pleases and to live as one desires which particularly charmed Temple in the land where the fogs are too heavy and the women too plain to please this inquisitive taster of life's delights. His enjoyment of this freedom Temple expressed in a letter to his father, describing a stolen trip through Holland which he and his sister took incognito, in spite of the arduous public burdens he was carrying:

The chief pleasure I had in my journey was, to observe the strange freedom that all men took in boats and inns, and all other common places, of talking openly whatever they thought upon all public affairs, both of their own State, and their neighbors; and this I had the advantage of finding more by being incognito, and think it the greatest piece of liberty that country so much values.⁸⁷

Temple and Lady Giffard called upon Johan de Witt for the first time at the close of this pleasant journey, and thus began the warm friendship which not only made possible the Triple Alliance, but also brought Temple into intimate relations with a gentleman whose way of life must have seemed to him delightful. Whether Temple, whom Lord Arlington considered not able to negotiate with the Prince of Orange, "for having been so intimate with Monsieur de Wit in my former Embassy,"⁸⁸ was actually introduced by the distinguished Pensioner to "L'Ordre de l'Union de la Joye," to which de Witt belonged, is a question. At least it is significant that this excellent burgher, who signed his letters to Temple "very affectionately," belonged to an order, the candidates to which must have "envie de rire, danser, gamboder et se réjouir,"⁸⁹ and whose single rule was "Fais ce que voudras."⁹⁰ At all events, Temple's letters from Holland to his friends in England, heavy with serious matters of state as they are, have an occasional lightness and charm which make one realize that his diplomatic concerns had not hardened him to the relaxations of life. To my Lord Lisle he writes in 1666 that he would like to introduce a little trouble into his life

. . . by sending you a little Spanish Mistress from hence, whose eyes might spoil your walks, and burn up all the green meadows at

Sheen, and find other ways of destroying that repose your Lordship pretends alone to enjoy, in spite of the common fate of mankind.⁹¹

He mourns with the Baron Wreden over his bad lodging at Oxford and consoles him with the thought that “. . . 'tis but half a dozen glasses more, and good or bad comes all to the same thing.” This is his best means of diversion, says Temple, for “. . . the crowd is so great at present in every house, that you will hardly find an opportunity of making love to your landlady.”⁹² At the close of this communication Temple observes, glancing back over the pages, “And is not this now a very fine letter for two grave Ministers of State?”⁹³ One can only say in response, would that there had been more such!

For most of Temple's letters, carefully pruned by himself and Swift at More Park, are of a solemnity worthy of the gravest Minister of State. They are concerned with the shifting political scene rather than with Temple's ruminations on the *summum bonum*, which, as we have seen, he was able so gracefully to express when he at last gave up his public career. That this attitude toward life, which finally emerged, was being formed during the eleven years Temple passed in Holland one cannot doubt.

Still less can one doubt the freedom with which the *libre penseurs* of this land of refugees were considering the question of the final end of life. Baptiste Stoppa or Stoupe, in a book called *La Religion des Hollondais* (1673), described “la liberté entière de célébrer leur mystères et servir Dieu comme il leur plaist”⁹⁴ of the various religious sects flourishing in Holland at that time, and indicated the interpretation of this liberty by the *libertins*.

Quant aux Libertins, il semble qu'autant qu'il y en a, ils ayent chacun leur sentiment particulier. La plus part croient qu'il y a un seul esprit de Dieu, qui est dans tous les vivans, qui est épandu par tout, qui est et qui vit dans toutes les Creatures; que la substance et immortalité de nostre âme n'est autre chose que cet esprit de Dieu; que Dieu luymesme n'est rien autre chose que cet esprit; que les âmes meurent avec les corps; que le péché n'est rien, que ce n'est qu'une simple opinion qui s'évanouit aussi-tost, pourveu qu'on n'en tienne point de conte; que le Paradis n'est qu'une illusion, une agreable chimère, que les Theologiens ont inventé pour engager les hommes à embrasser ce qu'on appelle vertu; que l'enfer n'est non

plus qu'un vain fantôme, que les mêmes Théologiens ont inventé pour détourner les hommes de ce qu'on appelle péché, c'est à dire pour les empêcher d'estre heureux en faisant ce qu'il leur plaist.⁹⁵

Stoupe referred to Spinoza, a philosopher with whom Des-maiseaux reports that Saint-Évremond enjoyed long conversations, as a man who had "pour bût principal de détruire toutes les Religions,"

. . . et d'introduire l'athéisme, le libertinage et la liberté de toutes les Religions. . . . il dit hautement que Dieu n'est pas un Estre doué d'intelligence, infiniment parfait et heureux comme nous l'imaginons, mais que ce n'est autre chose que cette vertu de la Nature qui est répandue dans toutes les Creatures.⁹⁶

To Saint-Évremond, who felt that "Rien n'est durable, qui ne s'accommode à la nature,"⁹⁷ Spinoza's suggestions must have been full of interest. For the sole end of this fastidious *libertin*, who describes himself as ". . . un philosophe également éloigné du superstitieux et de l'impie; un voluptueux que n'a pas moins d'aversion pour la débauche, que d'inclination pour les plaisirs,"⁹⁸ was to discover what for him felicity might be. Though he could say with the gayest,

Il faut briller d'une flamme légère,
Vive, brillante, et toujours passagère,⁹⁹

he nevertheless took a discriminating interest in the philosophic ideas floating about his world. "Quand je suis privé du commerce des gens du monde, j'ai recours à celui des savants."¹⁰⁰ To the beautiful Ninon de Lenclos, whose salon at The Hague he frequented, he wrote his most complete comment on what seemed to him "le souverain bien," after years of conversation among the wits and the philosophers of his time. "Sur la Morale d'Epicure" he observed,

. . . je confesse que de toutes les opinions des philosophes, touchant le souverain bien, il n'y en a point qui me paraisse si raisonnable que la sienne . . . que l'amour de la volupté et la suite de la douleur sont les premiers et les plus naturels mouvements qu'on remarque aux hommes; que les richesses, la puissance, l'honneur, la vertu peuvent contribuer à notre bonheur: mais que la seule jouissance du plaisir, la volupté, pour tout dire, est la véritable fin où toutes nos actions se rapportent.¹⁰¹

One has only to read through the table of contents of Charle-ton's *Epicurus' Morals* to realize that Temple was as true a son of this amiable pagan as was his older friend, Saint-Évremond. Both gentlemen took as a basic belief Epicurus' axiom,

Forasmuch as it's sweet, or pleasant, for a man to live without pain; and sweet, or pleasant likewise, to enjoy Good things, and be recreated by them: it is an evident truth that without both these sweetnesses or Pleasures, or one of them at least, Felicity cannot be understood.¹⁰²

"That pleasure is to be desired for itself, and pain to be avoided for itself,"¹⁰³ Temple doubted no more than Saint-Évremond, who said, ". . . je me fais une sagesse . . . de rejeter ce qui me déplaît et de recevoir ce qui me contente."¹⁰⁴

Though, according to Epicurus and his disciples, the "supreme felicity" is not attainable by man, he might spend his days pleasantly and calmly if he maintain "a thin, simple, and spare Diet,"¹⁰⁵ and "less than a pint of small Wine"¹⁰⁶ with his meals, in order to "cleanse and make sound that Vessel, the Heart of man; that so it may be easily filled with a few things, and find a sweetness and comfort in even the smallest thing that occurs unto it."¹⁰⁷—an admonition which, as we have seen, Temple gravely insisted upon, and one which Saint-Évremond voiced with a lighter touch,

L'estomac est la plus grand bien;
Sans lui les autres ne sont rien. . . .¹⁰⁸

This simple and genial philosophy, which made Temple admire the Duke of Lorraine, because he valued "no pleasures in life but the most natural and most easie,"¹⁰⁹ underlies the thought both of Temple, and his friend, Saint-Évremond. For though Temple was not sufficiently vigorous in his mind to share the scientist's faith in rationalism, nor sufficiently "enthusiastic" in his spirit to ally himself with the Cambridge Platonists, he had a real sympathy for the dilettante skeptics of his day, who understood how to live the meditative life and enjoy the greatest felicity described by Epicurus. And this is no small distinction in an age which was given to violent excesses in living, in spite of the equally excessive emphasis placed on control by the ra-

tionalists and the theologians. This is the wisdom which Montaigne, beloved by Saint-Évremond and Temple, had advanced a century earlier, when he said that virtue seemed to him not to dwell at the top of a steep and rugged precipice, but on a fruitful, sunny plain. Charron, too, felt that to live easily and naturally is to be happy, and this is the belief shared by the three great admirers of Montaigne and Charron—Guy Patin, Gabriel Naudé, and Gassendi—who agreed that the law of nature is the only true law for an *honnête homme*.

It must not be thought, however, that to maintain oneself as a loyal son of Epicurus was so easy a matter. For to most of Temple's contemporaries Epicurus seemed "pagan" and "atheistical." His ardent defender, Gassendi, whom Saint-Évremond considered the most sensible of the modern philosophers, attempted to show that "Epicure, dont nous avons coutume de mal parler, ne tient pas une volupté oisive et paresseuse, mais une volupté que la raison affermit,"¹¹⁰ and Charleton, in his *Apologie for Epicurus* (1656), called him ". . . a great Master of Temperance, Sobriety, Continence, Fortitude and all other Vertues, not a Patron of Impiety, Gluttony, Drunkenness, Luxury and all kinds of Intemperance."¹¹¹ But Bacon's judgment of Epicurus, as one who was "more fond of enjoying the sweets of thought than patient of the truth,"¹¹² translated in the popular mind became the thought that Epicurus was, above all else, a corrupter of morals. This is the verdict passed by Gale, in *The Court of the Gentiles*: "In Epicurus' Philosophie nothing was more pleasing to corrupt nature, than his Ethics, especially touching the chiefest good, which he placed in Pleasure."¹¹³ Thomas Burnet called Epicurus

A Man of slender Learning, yet extraordinary Wit; but so addicted to his Senses that he thought the Supreme Guide and Rule of Truth ought always to be taken from thence, much good may his omniscient Senses do him.¹¹⁴

Rapin, whose moral reflections were translated into English in 1674, expressed a similar scorn of Epicurus, whom he called "un voluptueux politique, qui vouloit plaire aux delicats, sans scandaliser les severes."¹¹⁵ John Smith expressed the feeling of all the Cambridge Platonists, who made tireless war on Epicurus, when he said, "I cannot think the most voluptuous

Epicurean could ever satisfy the cravings of his Soul with Corporeal pleasure, though he might endeavour to persuade himself there was no better."¹¹⁶ The idea that Epicurus encouraged vice and destroyed virtue by proposing an apology for pleasure persisted through the seventeenth century in spite of Gassendi's and Charleton's efforts to show that Epicurus' conception of pleasure was itself a noble conception. Epicurus' name in the writings of such moral essayists as Culpeper, Norris, Mackenzie, Bulstrode, and others,¹¹⁷ came to stand for sensuous pleasure, of a trivial if not of a vicious sort. Temple was the only English essayist of the seventeenth century to give complete expression to the epicurean idea that there is an art of living whereby a happy compromise might be struck in the unending struggle of reason and desire. It was in the conversation and writings of his charming elder friend, Saint-Évremond, who talked away his exile in Holland and England while Temple was passing back and forth between those two countries, that Temple found the thought which most nearly harmonized with his discreetly libertine temper. "Je pense qu'Épicure était un philosophe fort sage,"¹¹⁸ wrote Saint-Évremond, reviewing the current discussion of the morals of that pagan sage.

Temple could not share the faith of the scientific rationalists, who believed that intelligence might finally discover the laws of life, for his own experience told him that this was not possible; he could not find solace in the belief of the Cambridge Platonists who assured him that happiness lay outside of man in the realm of spirit, for he belonged by temperament to those who instinctively feel that happiness lies in the present or nowhere, and that it consists in a delicate balance between "reason" and "passion," mind and body. The *libertin* philosophy, which Temple finally accepted, found support in the moral philosophy of the classical writers, as well as in the seventeenth-century code of the *honnête homme*. It was interpreted quite differently by such a courtier as Rochester, such a philosopher as Gassendi, and such a man of the world as Saint-Évremond; the interpretation which one finds in Temple's essays is as graceful and humane as that of the most finished *honnête homme*.

Temple, then, put his faith in the *summum bonum* vouched for by Epicurus, Montaigne, Charron, Saint-Évremond, and other great *libertins*, when, after a troublesome political career,

he gave up worldly designs, and, instead, looked into himself, consulted the ancient philosophers, considered the thoughts of his contemporaries, and pursued "the most exquisite delights of sense . . . in the contrivance and plantation of gardens."¹¹⁹

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORIAN

I.

IN a certain sense, Temple's view of the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns can be taken as an extension and an elaboration of his attitude toward moral philosophy, which he maintained with as much ardor as is suitable for an urbanely smiling ex-ambassador to The Hague to manifest.

For what Temple argued, with an embroidery of misinformation at once delightful and maddening, was not that the ancients were superior to the moderns in any absolute sense, but that the moderns were not superior to the ancients. Temple, in his contemplation of the history of the world, could not believe in progress. For the very basic assumptions of his epicurean philosophy were that men in all ages and places are fundamentally alike, an unfortunate mixture of reason and passion; that any faith one might feel in the power of systematic thought to relieve man's dilemma is misplaced; and that to achieve a certain harmonious balance, which he with faint irony called "happiness," one should give up an interest in "natural philosophy," and learn to understand human nature, through observation of oneself and others.

That the extraordinarily complex quarrel as to how the past should be interpreted might be of immense importance to the future of scientific thought passed this "philosopher" by completely. And it was among the scientists, the real thinkers of the seventeenth century, that one of the most important battles in England between the ancients and the moderns was fought. Whether science should be free to proceed along the lines suggested by Bacon and Galileo, or should continue to accept the outworn assumptions of the ancients, was a question of great significance. But not to Temple. He, in his airy way, asked, "But what are the sciences wherein we pretend to excel?" and cast a haughty but ignorant eye on the ideas proposed by Copernicus, Descartes, Harvey, Hobbes, and others.

To understand what Temple's suggestive, intuitive mind thought about this quarrel, which affected men's ideas not only

of science, but also of ethics, history, and literature, one must lay aside his petulant comments on "natural philosophy." One must perceive that Temple's interest in the controversy was not that of the scientist at all, but, as we have seen, that of the epicurean moralist, who had through his own experience come upon a certain notion of what men essentially are.

It was also that of the student of history who, in pondering the writings not only of classical authors, but also of the explorers and missionaries of the seventeenth century, extended this theory to men of distant times and remote places. Temple, in his interpretation of the history of man, filled out a conception of the cyclic movements of civilizations, which, though an old theory itself, came to be a basic thought with the philosophers of the eighteenth century, with Bayle, Montesquieu, Voltaire, and the rest of the encyclopedists. Paradoxically enough, this violent denouncer of overweening science used for illustrative material not only his Greek and Latin authors, but also the undigested travel books of his day, with an interest in concrete example which might characterize a member of the despised Royal Society.

First, as to Temple's theory of the movement of civilizations. If one is so crude as to lift Temple's never completely expressed ideas on this subject of the sway of the ancients over modern minds from an intricate verbiage of classical myth and anthropological gossip, one discovers a line of thought which is not only suggestive, but almost logical. The crux of Temple's argument against those who are too zealous in their defense of the moderns lies in the following paragraph, near the opening of "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning":

The force of all that I have met with upon this subject, either in talk or writing is, first, as to knowledge; that we must have more than the ancients, because we have the advantage both of theirs and our own, which is commonly illustrated by the similitude of a dwarf's standing upon a giant's shoulders, and seeing more or further than he. Next as to wit or genius, that, nature being still the same, these must be much at a rate in all ages, at least in the same climates, as the growth and size of plants and animals commonly are; and if both these are allowed, they think the cause is gained.²

Temple, to whom, as we have seen, "knowledge" meant a certain human wisdom, answered the first argument by pointing

out that knowledge is obviously not accumulative, since man has remained essentially the same in all periods and countries. If one age could learn from another, surely the ancients might have taken advantage of the learning handed down to them from periods still more remote. Not only can men not be advanced by the accumulated knowledge of the past, but they might even lose by too much study of other men's works, which

. . . may lessen the force and growth of their own genius, by constraining and forming it upon that of others; [men] may have less knowledge of their own, for contenting themselves with that of those before them.³

Thus Temple lightly tossed aside the thought that one generation might learn from another and so move forward. There is, he remarked, a certain cultural fluctuation, which seems to be progress. But this is only an illusion, he said wearily. For,

One man, or one country, at a certain time runs a great length in some certain kinds of knowledge, but lose as much ground in others, that were perhaps as useful and as valuable. There is a certain degree of capacity in the greatest vessel, and, when 'tis full, if you pour it still, it must run out some way or other, and, the more it runs out on one side, the less runs out at the other. . . .⁴

With this rhythmically soothing metaphor Temple hypnotized himself into the belief that "the largest and deepest reach of thought, the more it pursues some certain subjects, the more it neglects others."⁵ Knowledge cannot be passed on from age to age, concluded Temple, perhaps remembering the fact that it had not been passed on to him during his brief stay at Cambridge. Men learn, forget, and learn again, remaining, all the while, fundamentally the same, neither better nor worse. Each generation, and each individual must learn afresh, as Temple had during his crowded public career, the only truth of any significance, the truth of human nature.

Having thus laid to rest the first argument of the modern pretenders, Temple answered the second—

. . . as to wit or genius, that, nature being still the same, these must be much at a rate in all ages, at least in the same climates, as the growth and size of plants and animals commonly are—

by admitting that this would indeed be true, but for the fact

that the physical and social environments do make a difference, and that certain countries and certain periods are more hospitable to genius than others. "In the growth and stature of souls," he wrote, again slipping into one of those balanced sentences, which so often satisfied his sense of truth in place of strict reasoning—

In the growth and stature of souls, as well as bodies, the common productions are of indifferent sizes, that occasion no gazing, nor no wonder: but, though there are or have been sometimes dwarfs and sometimes giants in the world, yet it does not follow, that there must be such in every age nor in every country: this we can no more conclude, than that there never have been any, because there are none now, at least in the compass of our present knowledge or inquiry. As I believe, there may have been giants at some time, and some place or other in the world, of such a stature, as may not have been equalled perhaps again, in several thousand years, or in any other parts; so there may be giants in wit and knowledge, of so over-grown a size, as not to be equalled again in many successions of ages, or any compass of place or country. . . .⁶

Because at Amboise there is a stag's head "of a most prodigious size," and because at Memorancy one is shown a large table cut out of a grapevine, should one therefore conclude that there is "such a stag in every great forest or such a vine in every large vineyard"? No, said Temple, for "many circumstances concur" to make trees, animals, and men differ in various ages and countries:

In the growth of a tree, there is the native strength of the seed, both from the kind, and from the perfections of its ripening, and from the health and vigour of the plant that bore it: there is the degree of strength and excellence, in that vein of earth where it first took root: there is a propriety of soil, suited to the kind of tree that grows in it: there is a great favour or dis-favour to its growth, from the accidents of water and of shelter, from the kindness or unkindness of seasons, till it be past the need or the danger of them. All these, and perhaps many others, joined with the propitiousness of climate, to that sort of tree, and the length of age it shall stand and grow, may produce an oak, a fig, or a plain-tree, that . . . shall not perhaps be paralleled in other countries or times.⁷

In other words—to translate this figure, so characteristic of a garden philosopher—men are potentially the same in all times

and places, but they actually vary enormously because of the conditions of their environment. The likeness and the difference of the products of nature was a paradox which constantly harassed Temple's tentative, balanced mind, perhaps because of the astuteness with which he studied not only his transplanted Fontainebleau peaches, but also the French and Dutch gentlemen he so gracefully manipulated at The Hague. Men are fundamentally the same in all parts of the world—that is an assumption which he will not give up. Climate Temple frequently thought of as an explanation of the curious differences in the appearance, the customs, and the temperaments of the Dutch and the French. "The nature of man seems to be the same in all times and places," he said, putting into abstract form the results of his contemplation of the cosmopolitan civilization of The Hague. Though men are unchanging, in a certain sense, they are

varied like their statures, complexions, and features, by the force and influence of the several climates where they are born and bred; which produced in them, by a different mixture of the humours, and operation of the air, a different and unequal course of imaginations and passions, and consequently of discourses and actions.⁸

These differences account for the "several customs, educations, opinions, and laws,"⁹ which mark the various nations, and also offer Temple an explanation of the "cold and heavy" Dutch, whom he could not find charming. "In general, all appetites and passions seem to run lower and cooler here, than in other countries where I have conversed,"¹⁰ he said at the outset of his "Observations Upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands," and proceeded to describe the attitude of the inhabitants of the murky land which had such an unfortunate effect on Temple's "spleen," toward love, business, religion, and government.

What more natural than that Temple should rationalize his gentlemanly preference for the ancients by means of the theory of climates, which had been borne in upon him during his recent sojourn on the continent? Though the moderns are potentially as great as the ancients, he meditated, still their productions are inferior. Might this not be due to climate?

I know not why a very good reason, for the great advantage of ancient above modern learning, may not be justly drawn from the force

and influence of climates, where they have grown; and why the regions of Assyria, Phoenicia, Egypt, and Lesser Asia, Greece, Rome, and especially China, may not be allowed to produce naturally greater force of wit and genius, of invention and penetration, than England, Holland, or the Northern parts of France and Germany, to which all our modern learning seems to have been confined.¹¹

Moreover, thought Temple gathering momentum, there are still other explanations for the "mighty progress of sciences" in those remote times so much dearer to his imagination than the cruder present, which had allowed him to retire from public service. There was "the long peace and flourishing condition of those ancient empires"; there was the "freedom of thought and inquiry in the Grecian and Italian republics," as opposed to the "perpetual wars and distractions that have infested Europe" since the barbarians overran the Roman Empire.¹² Therefore, though all men are essentially the same, genius seems to flourish more in one period and country than in another. An "ill season or great barrenness" overtakes the civilized world at certain times, accounted for "by the viciousness or negligence of education, by licentious customs, and luxuries of youth, by ill examples of Princes,"¹³ all of which Temple thought might explain the fact that the actual achievements of the moderns do not come up to those of the ancients. At the close of his "Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning" he offered several more "hindrances to learning," which might account for what seemed to Temple—who mused upon a richer civilization than any he saw around him—the barrenness of his own times. The rise of commerce, and the resulting emphasis on material gains seemed to this retired diplomat, who had helped to bring the Dutch wars to a conclusion, one important reason why art did not flourish in his day. Moreover, he continued, the religious disputes of the modern world turn men's minds from creative effort, and the lack of royal patronage dampens their enthusiasm. "But the last maim given to learning, has been by the scorn of pedantry," concluded this *honnête homme*, who would be thought a scholar as well, "which the shallow, the superficial, and the sufficient among scholars first drew upon themselves," by pretending to know more than they could know, and "by living so much among themselves, or in their closets and cells."¹⁴

In other words—to systematize Temple's thought in a way which would certainly surprise him—the popular line of argument usually advanced by the moderns, that knowledge is accumulative and man remains constant in his powers, and therefore must have gone beyond his ancestors, comes to nothing, because knowledge is not accumulative, and man, though fundamentally the same, actually varies enormously according to the climate of the country in which he is bred, and the social conditions under which he lives. Temple did not maintain that the ancients were superior to the moderns, since nature still produces minds of the same vigor. But he defended the traditional idea instilled in him at Cambridge, that the achievements of the ancients were more impressive than those of the moderns, and suggested as an explanation, not that nature was running down, but that circumstances were more advantageous to culture in those days. "I know of no circumstances," he wrote, drawing on his observation of the world, more than on his study of books, "like to contribute more to the advancement of knowledge and learning among men, than exact temperance in their races, great pureness of air, and equality of climate, long tranquillity of empire or government: and all these we may justly allow to those eastern regions. . . ." ¹⁵

But Temple, in combating what seemed to him the short-sightedness and arrogance of the moderns, who held that they had gone further in all human endeavor than those who had come before them, did not limit himself to pointing out the achievements of the Greeks and Romans. Indeed, the accounts of the greatness of the admirable civilizations of Greece and Rome seemed to this scholar something of a bore. They

. . . make the subject of what is called ancient story, and are so excellently related by the many Greek and Latin authors, still extant and in common vogue, so commented, enlarged, reduced into order by time and place, by many more of the modern writers, that they are known to all men, who profess to study or entertain themselves with reading. ¹⁶

Their governments, institutions, the events of their history form "the common themes of schools and colleges, the study of learned, the conversation of idle men." From the deeds of their heroes and rulers have already been extracted "the common ex-

amples of virtue and honour, the reproaches of vice,"¹⁷ so that, as far as Temple is concerned, the material is quite played out. There are other areas of the globe, however, which have hardly been thought about at all. For the stage of the stories of the Greek and Roman world is but "a limited compass of earth." It

. . . leaves out many vast regions of the world, the which, tho' accounted barbarous, and little taken notice of in story, or by any celebrated authors, yet have a right to come in for their voice, in agreeing upon the laws of nature and nations (for ought I know) as well as the rest, that have arrogated it wholly to themselves: and besides, in my opinion, there are some of them, that, upon inquiry, will be found to have equalled or exceeded all the others, in the wisdom of their constitutions, the extent of their conquests, and the duration of their empires or states.¹⁸

Temple's quick imagination was moved by the conception of *time* which he derived from those who wrote of ancient civilizations; it was equally moved by the extended notion of *space* brought to him by the crude accounts of travelers to the remote parts of the world. This defender of the tried and the familiar proposed that ". . . we consider the map of the world, as it lies at present before us, since the discoveries made by the navigators of these three last centuries."¹⁹ The loadstone is the only invention "in latter ages" which drew any approval from Temple, for "it is to this we owe the discovery and commerce of so many vast countries" hardly known to the ancients, and "the experimental proof of this terrestrial globe, which was before only speculation"²⁰—strange terms to drop from Temple's lips, who so often assures us that our heart knows all that need be known.

So moved was Temple, indeed, by the "matter of action and speculation" afforded by "these out-lying parts of the world" that he expressed a great impatience with "the modern learned," who still murmured on about "the other scene so much celebrated in story."²¹ He was scornful, too, of the "common and poor relations of traders, seamen or travellers,"²² who have "introduced into our acquaintance, and our maps" the continents of China, Africa, and the Indies, but have not described to us much more than "the customs and manners of so many original nations which we call barbarous, and I am sure have treated

them as if we hardly esteem them to be a part of mankind."²³ What this eager moralizer wished to hear of, on the other hand, was ". . . the excellent constitutions of laws and customs, the wise and lasting foundations of states and empires" exemplified by these strange lands just appearing on his horizon. Temple, therefore, attempted to synthesize this fresh material himself, and thus to vindicate his conception of the rise and fall of civilization in many ages and many places. He turned to the travel books of his day in order to survey the "four great schemes of government or empire, that have sprung and grown to mighty heights, lived very long, and flourished much in these remote (and, as we will have it, more ignoble) regions of the world. . . ."²⁴ Not only did Temple illustrate, in his accounts of China, Peru, Scythia, and Arabia, the fluctuation of civilizations, but, by stressing the moral ideas underlying the culture of these peoples, he supported with concrete example his theory that man is always fundamentally the same in spite of superficial differences in customs.

Bishop Burnet was quite right, then, when he so scornfully observed that Temple ". . . seemed to think that things were as they are from all eternity. At least he thought religion was fit only for the mob. He was a great admirer of the sect of Confucius in China, who were atheists themselves, but left religion to the rabble."²⁵ One reason, surely, why China fascinated Temple was that in the sayings of Confucius, written so many thousands of years ago, by a man who lived on the other side of the world from England, he found his own ideas on moral philosophy, and one more evidence of his cherished thought "that things were as they are from all eternity." For Confucius, like Socrates, held ". . . the design of reclaiming men from the useless and endless speculations of nature, to those of morality."²⁶

Though Temple decorated his "short survey" of the Chinese empire with geographical information as to the extent of China, its boundaries, mountains, rivers, provinces, and towns; though he paused a moment on the imperial city of Peking, as any retired ambassador would, and described the Emperor's palace, commenting in some detail on his system of government, it was the teaching of Confucius that really made the center of his study of China. For Temple saw in the writing of this "most

learned, wise, and virtuous of all the Chinesees”²⁷ a summary, if not of his personal code, at least of the code which his rational mind advocated for the rest of the world:

The sum of his writings seem to be a body or digestion of ethics, that is, of all moral virtues, either personal, oeconomical, civil or political; and framed for the institution and conduct of men's lives, their families, and their governments, but chiefly of the last: the bent of his thoughts and reasonings running up and down this scale, that no people can be happy but under good governments, and no governments happy but over good men; and that, for the felicity of mankind, all men in a nation, from the Prince to the meanest peasant, should endeavour to be good, and wise, and virtuous, as far as his own thoughts, the precepts of others, or the laws of his country can instruct him.²⁸

The fundamental thought which Temple so admired in Confucius was that every man should try to improve “his own natural reason to the greatest height he is capable, so as he may never (or as seldom as can be) err and swerve from the law of nature in the course and conduct of his life.”²⁹ Temple agreed with Confucius that much thought and diligence should be put upon the study of philosophy, since in the perfection of reason, and therefore of body and mind, lies the “utmost or supreme happiness of mankind.”³⁰

That the writings of Confucius should be the basis of the learning of the Chinese, and that “all other sorts are either disused or ignoble among them” seemed to Temple altogether desirable. He observed with satisfaction that what we call “scholastic or polemic, is unknown or unpractised, and serves, I fear, among us, for little more than to raise doubts and disputes.” Not only are the natural sciences looked down upon in China, but so also are studies which have to do with government, since “the Confutian only is essential and incorporate to their government.”³¹

Temple, then, derived from his reading of the accounts of China, a sense of the wisdom and humanity of these people, who might be expected to seem so fundamentally different from the English. Though his eye was caught by a few of the picturesque features of Chinese civilization, such as the Great Wall, and the colors of the costumes, he minimized the strange and the unfamiliar, and stressed what seemed to him the uni-

versal wisdom of a race so remote from his own. He referred to the "gross and sottish idolatry" of the "vulgar and illiterate, who worship, after their manner, whatever idols belong to each city, or village, or family,"³² but glossed over this indication of the differences in the human race by saying:

But the learned adore the Spirit of the world, which they hold to be eternal; and this without temples, idols, or Priests. . . . This I mention to shew how the farthest East and West may be found to agree in notions of divinity, as well as in excellence of civil or politic constitutions, by passing at one leap from these of China to those of Peru.³³

One accomplishes the leap without much difficulty, for Temple, who, ". . . reflecting on the Policy and Morality of divers Nations, deduces thence useful Lessons of Prudence, and delightfully surveys the strange Circulations of Human Nature,"³⁴ found in his study of books about Mexico and Peru substantially the same thought as that which he had discovered in his study of China—that Peru, too, might be taken as a remarkable example of a civilization, remote from Europe, which had flourished and passed; that, beneath the differences in government and social custom, one can perceive the fundamental moral beliefs which are shared by all men. As in the case of China, so now, Temple stresses the similarities of the moral ideas of the Peruvians and the Europeans.

After a brief allusion to "the territory, power, and riches" of Peru, which surprised those "who had been acquainted with the greatness and splendor of the European kingdoms," and to the custom of sacrificing men every year "to an ugly deformed idol," Temple dropped these two tempting subjects, and turned to what was far more congenial to him, an account of the excellent moral ideas introduced by Mango Copac and his wife and sister, Coya Mama, among these wild people, "who dwelt in rocks or caves or trees,"³⁵ without any traces of law and order.

Mango Copac and his worthy sister, however, introduced the ideas which, to Temple, seemed the basis of human society for all men, even for those still living in trees. This brother and sister, Temple reports, told the natives who gathered about them that they were the children of the Sun, and that their

father regretted their miserable condition, and wished to reclaim them from "bestial lives" helping them ". . . to live happily and safely, by observing such laws, customs, and orders, as their father the Sun had commanded these his children to teach them." One is not surprised to find that the rule these two intruders first taught was "that every man should live according to reason." This was "the great principle of their morality."³⁶ In the next place, they must worship the Sun, the life-giver, who made the crops grow, but this primitive ritual, like that of the Chinese, was only for the vulgar. The sages and the philosophers, as soon as any appeared, understood by "the Sun," "He that animates or enlivens the world," and thus entertained a very "refined notion of the deity,"³⁷ probably quite akin to that held by Temple himself. This was doubtless Mango Copac's understanding of the matter too, for "at the end of a long and adored reign,"³⁸ in the course of which he taught his subjects how to sow grain, to wear clothes, to build houses, and "to distinguish themselves by wedlock into several families,"³⁹ he called his children and grandchildren to his bedside

. . . and told them, that for his own part he was going to repose himself with his father the Sun, from whom he came; that he advised and charged them all, to go on in the paths of reason and virtue which he had taught them, till they followed him the same journey.⁴⁰

Thus ended the reign of this upholder of reason and virtue, whose rule, "like that of a tender father over his children,"⁴¹ stood for the philosophical ideas which Temple, the moralist, nursed in his mind, but was unable to find reflected in the scene about him. Again, as in his "survey" of China, Temple dwelt on the moral conceptions of this strange civilization, and tended to pass over the individualizing characteristics of the Peruvian culture. "I will say nothing of the greatness, magnificence, and riches of their buildings, palaces, or temples, especially those of the Sun; of the splendor of their Court, their triumphs after victories,"⁴² nor their barbaric feasts, military exercises, hunting customs, or any of the other peculiarities of this race, which might suggest the dissimilarities of peoples. Temple winds up his discussion of Peru with a characteristic flourish, which is, indeed, the "useful lesson" he is so pleased to find in his study of races:

. . . it must, I think, be allowed, that human nature is the same in these remote, as well as the other more known and celebrated parts of the world. That the different governments of it are framed and cultivated by as great reaches and strength of reason and wisdom, as any of ours, and some of their frames less subject to be shaken by the passions, factions, and other corruptions, to which those in the middle scenes of Europe and Asia have been so often and so much exposed. That the same causes produce everywhere the same effects, and that the same honours and obedience are in all places but consequences or tributes paid to the same heroic virtue, or transcendent genius, in what parts soever, or under what climates of the world, it fortunes to appear.⁴³

And therefore it is absurd for those who happen to live in Europe to think that they have surpassed, in their notion of civilization, what has been attained to in many remote parts of the world, and will be reached again.

Contemplation of the "northern region," the land of the Goths, "may justly mortify the pride of mankind" too, for there is no part of Europe which has not been ravaged by tribes from these parts, "whom they reckoned and dispised as barbarous." But to Temple, eager to extend the imagination of the men of his world beyond the limits of the known and the familiar, "the depths of their reasoning, the reach of their politics, the wisdom of their laws" seemed to be "a great and undisputed triumph of nature over art"⁴⁴—than which Temple could say nothing more extravagant! "The writers of these times" are not just when they explain the victories of these so-called barbarous tribes on the score of their numbers and fierceness. No,—"'Tis more likely, that there was among them some principle of courage above the common strain."⁴⁵ And this is what Temple, without much precision, attempts to analyze, under the following headings: first "a principle of religion or superstition, the next of learning, and the last of policy or civil government."⁴⁶ His paragraphs on each of these subjects are vague and partial; it is interesting, nevertheless, that Temple should have tried to read into what he could discover of these northern people his general theory of civilization—that all men being fundamentally alike, the temporary greatness of their culture depends on certain accidents of climate or social institutions.

"The principle of religion or superstition" characteristic of the Goths, which struck Temple's imagination, was their attitude toward death. They believed

. . . that death was but the entrance into another life; that all men who lived lazy and unactive lives, and died natural deaths, by sickness, or by age, went into vast caves under ground, all dark and miry. . . .⁴⁷

Whereas those who threw themselves into the "conquest of their neighbors, and slaughter of enemies," and were finally fortunate enough to be killed in battle, went at last to the hall of Odin, where they were entertained "at infinite tables, in perpetual feast and mirth, carousing every man in bowls made of the skulls of their enemies." Temple illustrates this fearlessness of the northern men by quoting a verse from Lucan, and then the twenty-fifth and twenty-ninth stanzas of the song of Rednor Ladbrog, which, he points out, is worth reading by those who love poetry, "to consider the several stamps of that coin, according to several ages and climates."⁴⁸ Though it is as an illustration of the moral courage of the Goths that Temple cites these stanzas, he turns aside from his point and comments on the "truely poetical" vein of the poetry, "taking it with the allowance of the different climates, fashions, opinions, and languages of such distant countries,"⁴⁹ suggesting, by this casual remark, his interest in the peculiarities of the form in which different races express the permanently poetic. Temple's treatment of the "principle of learning" is brief, perhaps because his information was scant, perhaps because his impulse to prove his point had now run down, as it so often did before his essays were finished. But meager as his remarks are, they are sufficient to show that his notion of what is useful knowledge is still in his mind.

Their principle of learning was, that all they had among them was applied to the knowledge and distinction of seasons, by the course of the stars, and to the prognostics of weather, or else to the praise of virtue.⁵⁰

Temple's thoughts on the principle of policy or civil government are turned aside into a long argument as to the origin of the words *Baro* and *Feudum*, and prove nothing at all. The interest of this inquiry into the achievements of the remote people

of this "northern region," rambling and disjointed as it is, lies in the fact that Temple should have considered this little known part of the world important enough to include in his interpretation of a theory of civilization. And his remarks were among the earliest to turn men's attention to the Gothic genius, which proved so absorbing to the eighteenth century.

The last ". . . of the four outlying (or, if the learned so please to call them, barbarous) empires" which Temple attempted to cope with, that of the Arabians or Saracens, would hardly fit into his notion of how things ought to be. For this civilization, which he none the less struggled with, seemed to him ". . . of a very different nature from all the rest, being built upon foundations wholly enthusiastic, and thereby very unaccountable to common reason, and in many points contrary even to human nature." Since, as Temple remarks, this empire had "engaged in perpetual wars with the Christian Princes,"⁵¹ the siege of Vienna in 1683, "which is a story too fresh and too known to be told here,"⁵² having so recently stirred all of Europe, Temple is rather put to it to discover in these fierce people the fundamental human virtues shared by all men. He contents himself by saying that it ". . . seems to have been, in all points, the fiercest, as that of the Ynca's was the gentlest, that of China the wisest, and that of the Goths the bravest, in the world."⁵³

With this justification of his curiosity as to the empire which so recently menaced Europe, Temple turns to his "survey," falling back on the same method of analysis which he used for China, Peru, and Scythia. He explains first the moral code instituted by Mahomet, whom Temple recognizes at once as a brother moralizer. He taught his followers to believe in "one God creator of the world . . . who governed all things in it." Mahomet was the last and greatest prophet, who came among men "to establish a kingdom upon earth that should propagate this divine law and worship throughout the world."⁵⁴

After several confusing pages on the Persian and the Arabian branches of the Saracen empire, Temple attempts, without great success, to summarize the history of the Arabian branch from the time of the great Almanzor, "who must be allowed to have as much excelled, and as eminently, in learning, virtue, piety, and native goodness, as in power, in valour, and in em-

pire,"⁵⁵ to the recent collapse of the Ottoman empire and the withdrawal of the Turks from Europe. This effort to pick out the salient points of a chapter in history not yet closed is followed by an analysis of the social and political ideas of this "enthusiastic" race, which might explain its "sudden growths," and equally sudden declines. Temple's belief in a basic moral code, in loyal adherence to traditional political forms, his distrust of "curious" learning, are all illustrated by this list of the "principles" which gave power to the Ottoman empire, and might strengthen any nation in the world. The first principle "upon which this fierce government was founded and raised to such a height" seems to Temple the Mahometan religion; the second, "a belief infused of divine designation of the Ottoman line," so that the people "held obedience to be given in all things to the will of their Ottoman Prince, as to the will of God"; a third, the division of conquered countries into soldiers' shares; a fourth, "the allowance of no honours nor charges, no more than lands, to be hereditary, but all to depend upon the will of the Prince"; fifth, the suppression of learning, "among the subjects of their whole empire"; sixth, the institution of the Janizaries, a carefully trained body of soldiers; seventh "the great temperance introduced into the general customs of the Turks, but more particularly of the Janizaries, by the severe defence and abstinence of wine, and by the provision of one only sort of food for their armies, which was rice"; and finally, the speed and severity of justice.⁵⁶ After proposing these eight reasons for the strength of the Turkish empire, Temple with equal pleasure traced the degeneration of the Janizaries, the final "mutinous humour" of this body, which caused the collapse of the empire, whose "growth and progress . . . was so sudden and so violent, the two or three first centuries, that it raised fear and wonder throughout the world. . . ."⁵⁷ Here is another civilization which grew to a point of great magnificence and power and sank again. Temple was fascinated by the thought, and concluded in this case, as in that of China, Peru, and Scythia, that

The reason of this may be drawn not only from the periods of empire, that, like natural bodies, grow for a certain time, and to a certain size, which they are not to exceed; but from some other causes both within and without. . . .⁵⁸

It is the interpretation of these causes, "both within and without," making for the rhythmic fluctuations of cultures, which moved Temple, defender of tradition as he was, to pore over the accounts of strange lands brought back by missionaries, merchants, and foreign ambassadors. What he found in these reports to uphold his theory that civilizations come and go, and that men remain curiously the same, he offered to "our modern learned . . . who will have the world 'to be ever improving, and that nothing is forgotten that ever was known among mankind.'"⁵⁹ Civilizations rise and fall; what was is soon forgotten; man learns again that which was known many ages ago, himself remaining much the same. Solomon said, and Temple, with intense satisfaction repeated the idea:

The thing that has been, is that which shall be, and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? It has been already of old time which was before us: there is no remembrance of former things, neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.⁶⁰

Temple, who was oblivious of the real importance of the scientific thought of his day, felt simply a "just indignation at the insolence of the modern advocates"⁶¹ who were, he thought, supporting too insular a view of the achievements of their age.

Though Temple did not believe that the world was running down, it is obvious that his personal tastes were those inbred in him by a classical education, and the gentlemanly tradition. What he concluded, then, while he reread his "ancients," and thought of Epicurus, was that progress is an illusion of an arrogant and annoying sort—a conclusion amply supported by all that explorers, merchants, and missionaries could tell him. To think that perfection is to be attained by men, that all can be known, is not only to lose track of the facts of human nature, he meditated, but also to be lacking in a sense of the many civilizations, still older than those of Greece and Rome, that the world has known, forgotten, and uncovered again. To entertain the thought of progress is, in short, to seem a barbarian, and this above all else Temple would never have wished to appear.

II.

THE cyclic conception of the rise and fall of civilization, which Temple developed with more warmth of imagination than accuracy of information, has always possessed men's minds. Temple seized upon the idea in order to combat the first of the axioms advanced by "the modern advocates"—that knowledge is accumulative from generation to generation—and in doing so Wotton, who undertook a critical examination of Temple's ideas soon after their publication, felt that this cautious free-thinker had dealt a blow to religion itself. "Among all the Hypotheses of those who would destroy our most Holy Faith, none is so plausible as that of the Eternity of the World,"⁶² he wrote.

The fabulous Histories of the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Chinese seem to countenance that Assertion. The seeming Easiness of solving all Difficulties that occur, by pretending that sweeping Floods, or general and successive Invasions of Barbarous Enemies, may have, by Turns, destroy'd all the Records of the World, till within these last Five or Six Thousand Years, makes it very desirable to those whose Interest it is, that the Christian Religion should be but an empty Form of Words. . . .⁶³

But this sense of the eternal coming and going of civilization, which Wotton felt he must, in the interest of religion, combat, is so old that its origin is lost in antiquity.⁶⁴ The Babylonians are said to have introduced it into Greece, where it was considered in various ways by the Stoic and Orphic philosophers, and finally by the Church Fathers, who tried to find the thought in the book of Genesis. The idea was expressed by such classical writers as Plato, Aristotle, and Seneca, and during the middle ages it was curiously associated with the legend of the coming of Christ. In the Renaissance Jean Bodin, attempting to formulate a new theory of history, said that knowledge, letters, and arts have their vicissitudes, that they rise, flourish, languish, and die, only to begin a new cycle in another part of the world.⁶⁵ Louis Le Roy wrote an essay, *De la vicissitude ou variété des choses en l'univers* (1577), in which he surveyed the great periods of the past, the Egyptian, Assyrian, Persian, Roman, and Saracen, and observed that confusion follows order, barbarism succeeds civilization, ignorance knowledge, and that the world will eventually sink back into original chaos

Montaigne hinted at the notion in his "Apologie de Raimond Sebond," and again in his essay, "Des Coches":

Si nous voyons autant du monde comme nous n'en voyons pas, nous apercevrons, comme il est à croire, une perpetuele multiplication et vicissitude de formes.⁶⁶

Daniel, in "A Defence of Rime" (?1603), suggested "that it is but the clowds gathered about our owne judgment that makes us thinke all other ages wrapt up in mists, and the great distance betwixt us that causes us to imagine men so farre off to be so little in respect to ourselves,"⁶⁷ and Bacon in his thoughts on the vicissitudes of things referred to "the great Winding Sheets that burie all Things in Oblivion," such as deluges and earthquakes. He suggested that a record be made of the cycles of thought of the past: "their antiquities, their progresses, their migrations (for sciences migrate like nations) over the different parts of the globe; and again their decays, disappearances, and revivals."⁶⁸

Wotton was probably aware that in the first quarter of his own century Hakewill, Archdeacon of Surrey, who wrote *An Apology or Declaration of the Power and Providence of God* (1627) in answer to Bishop Goodman's book on the gradual degeneration of man since ancient times,⁶⁹ then made elaborate use of this same cyclic theory of civilization:

. . . As a Ship which rideth at Anchor is tossed to and fro by the Windes and Waves, and yet cannot move beyond the length of his Cable, but is carried about in a Round, still moving yet never re-mooved.

Or as a Wheele, at every turne, bringeth about all his Spoakes to the same places, observing a constancy even in turning.

So though there be many changes and variations in the World, yet all things come about one time or another to the same points againe.

And there is nothing new under the Sunne.⁷⁰

Hakewill, like Temple after him, pushed his studies beyond the classical period to the Persians, the Chaldeans, and the Egyptians, to find evidence for the rise and fall of learning, which, he concluded—and here Temple did not follow him—described a "kind of circular progress." Felltham, in his *Resolves* (1621), and Barclay, in *The Mirrour of Mindes* (1631), make use of

the same idea—in the first instance, to suggest the final dissolution of all things, and in the second, to introduce the notion that the various civilizations which have passed over the world are all worth studying. And Thomas Burnet, in his *Doctrina Antiqua* (1692), dwelt on the inconstancy of human affairs in his presentation of still another idea—that the world originally sprang from the “antediluvian egg”: “Not only are Empires changed,” he wrote, “but Learning, Manners and Religion, pass from one Country to another; and since all cannot enjoy them together, we do it alternately. Human Affairs are so ordered, as if it were decreed, that in such a Circle of Time, every Country and Nation should take its Turn, both in good and evil Events.”⁷¹

The cyclic theory of civilization, then, was one which was suggested on every hand in Temple's day by men interested in science, history, philosophy, or theology. It was not the thought itself, but rather the interpretation Temple drew from the idea which aroused the interest of the scientific and literary men of both England and France, who were at that moment concerned with the possible effect of this conception of civilization on man's efforts to “progress.” Wotton, in his *Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning*, undertook to speak for both of these groups. For to hold to the idea—as Temple, whose approach was the moral philosopher's, quietly insisted upon doing—that men neither degenerate nor advance, that the civilization in which they live is in a continual flux but that they are neither better nor worse, seemed to be too difficult a balance for those who are bent on achievement. To Temple, however, achievement had proved an illusion; how reassuring, then, to point out with such smiling disdain that so it would prove to others!

Bacon, sensing early in the century the psychological danger lurking in the cyclic conception of civilization so soothing to Temple's imagination, spoke out against the “wise and serious men” who did not believe in progress,

. . . supposing that in the revolution of time and of the ages of the world the sciences have their ebbs and flows; that at one season they grow and flourish, at another wither and decay, yet in such sort that when they have reached a certain point and condition they can advance no further.⁷²

Therefore Bacon, in his zeal for the "new science," popularized the idea, which so roused the ire of Temple when it was interpreted by the Royal Society, that the moderns actually have the advantage of the ancients, "inasmuch as it is a more advanced age of the world, and stored and stocked with infinite experiments and observations."⁷³ Bacon presented the analogy, found also in the Latin classics, and in patristic and medieval writers,⁷⁴ between the stages of a man's life and the development which the world undergoes. According to this metaphor, the ancients lived in the childhood of the world, and the moderns in the time of the world's maturity. In other words, knowledge is accumulative and progress therefore possible:

And truly as we look for greater knowledge of human things and a riper judgment in the old than in the young . . . so in like manner from our age, if it but knew its own strength and chose to essay and exert it, much more might fairly be expected than from the ancient times.⁷⁵

The stock of learning is increasing; if scientists would but use the proper method men might, by progressive discoveries, gain control of nature. This is the tempting idea which Bacon held out to the world, and which the Royal Society acted upon.

For the Royal Society, founded with the purpose of carrying out Bacon's belief in experimental knowledge, was dedicated to the proposition that thought does progress from age to age. Sprat, in his *History* (1667), though he expressed the familiar idea that civilization moves in cycles, explained that thought had, nevertheless, moved beyond the point to which the Greeks and Romans brought it, for we are standing upon their shoulders. The case might have been otherwise,

If our Predecessors, a thousand, nay even a hundred years ago, had begun to add little by little to the Store, if they would have endeavour'd to be Benefactors, and not Tyrants over our Reasons: if they would have communicated to us, more of their Works, and less of their Wit.⁷⁶

Glanvill, another defender of the "new science," stated his particular bias in the very title of his defense—*Plus Ultra: Or the Progress and Advancement of Knowledge since the days of Aristotle In an account of some of the most Remarkable Late Improvements of Practical, Useful Learning: To encourage*

Philosophical Endeavours (1668). To the scientist, Bacon's idea that the modern world, in spite of the fluctuations of cultures, was more mature, more experienced, and therefore more "ancient" than the so-called ancient world, probably did seem true. The invention of various instruments for the correction of men's sense impressions, the microscope, the telescope, the compass, and many others—not in the least impressive to Temple—had led to such swift progress in science that it seemed, indeed, as though men were coming into a sort of maturity unknown to previous ages. While Temple nursed his mildly pleasant pessimism in the Dutch garden of More Park, men like Descartes, Malebranche, and Pascal found hope in the thought originally advanced by Bacon, that

. . . les hommes sont aujourd'hui en quelque sorte dans le mesme estat où se trouveroient ces anciens philosophes, s'ils pouvaient avoir vieilli jusques à present, en ajoutant aux cognoissances qu'ils avoient celles que leurs estudes auroient pu leur acquerir à la faveur de tant de siècles . . . tous les hommes ensemble y font un continuel progres à mesure que l'univers vieillit. . . . De sorte que toute la suite des hommes, pendant le cours de tant de siècles, doit estre considérée comme un mesme homme qui subsiste tousjours et qui apprend continuellement. . . .⁷⁷

Temple, as a moral philosopher who understood the natural limits to man's attainments, felt called upon to utter his objection to this notion of progress expressed not only by the scientists, but also by a group of clever critics in Paris, to whom perhaps Saint-Évremond had drawn his attention. Temple's argument with the critics, as with the scientists, was based on his philosophic belief that, in the fluctuations of cultures men remain fundamentally the same. The thought that the moderns surpass the ancients—not that the men of the present are potentially as great as those of the past—is the attitude which seemed to Temple arrogant and immoderate. Fontenelle, whose *Pluralité des mondes* Temple pointed to as one of the books which finally roused him to declare his impatience with the insolence of the moderns,⁷⁸ had expressed five years earlier, in his *Dialogues des morts* (1683), exactly the point of view cherished by Temple. In a delightful conversation between Socrates and Montaigne, who has just joined the shades, Fontenelle set forth Temple's favorite idea. "Les habits changent" says Soc-

rates, in answer to Montaigne's question as to whether some ages were not greater than others, "mais ce n'est pas à dire que la figure des corps change aussi. La politesse ou la grossièreté, la science ou l'ignorance, le plus ou le moins d'une certaine naïveté, le génie sérieux ou badin, ce ne sont là que les dehors de l'homme, et tout cela change: mais le cœur ne change point, et tout l'homme est dans le cœur. . . . L'ordre général de la nature a l'air bien constant."⁷⁷⁹ But "l'ordre général de la nature" did not seem so constant to most of those who were alive in Paris during the time of Louis XIV, and enjoying the plays of Corneille, Racine, and finally of Molière who could say with such good-humored defiance, the ancients were the ancients, but we are the men of today. Perrault, who inherited the quarrel from Saint-Sorlin, the defender of the Christian against the classical epic, was able to maintain in *Le Siècle de Louis Le Grand* (1687) the thesis which seemed harmless enough to Temple, that man is as capable of producing art at the present as he ever was.

But Perrault was no more able than Fontenelle to abide by so mild a statement, and in his *Parallèle des anciens et des modernes* (1688-96), he proposed exactly the idea which Temple combated, that knowledge increases with time, that man does not degenerate, and that therefore the moderns must be superior to the ancients. In the *Parallèle*, written with such humor and finesse, art, eloquence, poetry, and science are all discussed by Mr. le Président, a downtrodden devotee of antiquity, and L'Abbé, a brisk champion of the modern age and Perrault's spokesman. L'Abbé, as one would expect, carries over to this debate as to progress in the arts, Bacon's restatement of the old idea, ". . . il est très-vray que c'est nous qui sommes les Anciens."⁷⁸⁰ It is knowledge and experience which give to "les viellards" the advantage over the young, and it is this advantage which the moderns have over the ancients, because of the "grand nombre de nouvelles acquisitions qu'ils ont faites par leur travail et par leur étude."⁷⁸¹ The elated Abbé even goes so far as to say, "Je me réjouis de voir nostre siècle parvenu en quelque sorte au sommet de la perfection."⁷⁸² Not only the sciences, but the arts as well, "ont reçu, depuis le temps des Anciens une infinité d'accroissemens considerables,"⁷⁸³ since we have grown more astute in our understanding of the

human heart on which art is based. Perrault takes a brief glance at the idea that civilization does not, as a matter of fact, proceed in such a pleasantly direct manner, that the tenth century, for instance, was not superior to the Greek and Roman period. Instead of concluding that culture moves in circles, he says that science and art, like rivers, flow at times underground, but that their course eventually is direct.

Fontenelle, similarly, in his *Digression sur les anciens et les modernes* (1688), which appeared in the same year as the first part of Perrault's *Parallèle*, modified his earlier thought that "L'ordre général de la nature a l'air bien constant" by saying that, though "La Nature a entre les mains une certaine pâte qui est toujours la même qu'elle tourne et retourne sans cesse en mille facons,"⁸⁴ man inherits knowledge, not only of the sciences but also of the arts. Fontenelle concludes by presenting again the figure popularized by Bacon:

Un bon esprit cultivé est, pour ainsi dire, composé de tous les esprits des siècles précédens; ce n'est qu'un même esprit qu'est cultivé pendant tant ce temps là. . . . Il est maintenant dans l'âge de virilité.⁸⁵

It was the later view expressed by these two elegant advocates of the moderns, Perrault and Fontenelle, that though man himself is unchanging, knowledge is accumulative, and that therefore the world has progressed, which Temple, unfortunately for his peace of mind, was moved to attack. For the thought that men might at this late date overstep the limits set by nature to his efforts so many centuries ago was a notion that Temple, in spite of his careful regard for "balance," could not contemplate with equanimity, since it contradicted the basic beliefs as to the nature of man, which he in his quiet seclusion had come to rely on. To believe in the cyclic conception of civilization and also in progress, as many of the defenders of the moderns, both scientists and literary men, were able to do, seemed difficult to Temple. He could not say, with that discreet Jesuit father, Bouhours, who so artfully believed both in the eternal coming and going of civilizations and in the superiority of the present, first that

. . . cette barbarie ou cette politesse des esprits passe de pays de pays et de siècle en siècle par des voies qui nous sont souvent incon-

nuës. En un temps, une nation est grossière, et en un autre elle est ingénieuse,⁸⁶

and then that

Je suis ravi . . . que vous ne soyez pas de ces gens que l'amour de l'Antiquité aveugle, et qui s'imaginent qu'on n'a point d'esprit dans les derniers siècles Pour moy, je suis un peu de l'avis de Chancelier Bacon, qui croit que l'antiquité des siècles est la jeunesse du monde, et qu'à bien compter, nous sommes proprement les Anciens.⁸⁷

Temple felt, on the contrary, that if civilizations have in the past run to such great heights and fallen again, repeating the process many times over, it is probable that knowledge is not accumulative at all, and that men do not progress.

As Temple found reinforcements in the very camp of the enemy with which he could defend his first argument—that knowledge is not accumulative—so was he able to find among the ideas advanced by Fontenelle and Perrault and other advocates of the moderns, who “cloath their Thoughts in so engaging a Dress, that a Man is tempted to receive all they say, without Examination,”⁸⁸ excellent material with which to defend his second argument—that though men are essentially the same in all ages, they actually vary because of the differences in climates and social conditions. Fontenelle, indeed, after making extravagant claims for the superiority of the moderns in his *Digressions sur les anciens et les modernes*, suddenly flashes round on his reader with the thought that perhaps the effect of climate is so great that one cannot assume, what is really the very basis of his whole argument, that men and trees are alike in all countries, as well as in all ages:

Mais si les arbres de tous les siècles sont également grands, les arbres de tous les pays ne le sont pas. Voilà des differences aussi pour les esprits. Les differentes idées sont comme des plantes ou des fleurs qui ne viennent pas également bien en toutes sortes de climats. . . .⁸⁹

Fontenelle slides over the difficulty by saying that since all parts of the world are in communication ideas quickly become popularized; therefore the effect of the climate on the thoughts of people is not important. Temple, himself very sensitive to weather, could not so easily dismiss the psychological effect of climate on men's temperaments.

But many observers of the peculiarities of the human race

had been struck by the possible influence of climate before the time of Fontenelle and Temple. Scattered through Plato, Aristotle, Hippocrates, and Strabo one finds suggestions of this sort, which might easily have caught Temple's eye. Plato, in *The Laws*, warned his reader that laws must vary according to the place in which they are to be enforced, for winds, waters, and temperature change the characters of men. Aristotle, in discussing the problem of government, considered the differences between those who live in hot and cold climates, and Hippocrates explained the mildness of the Asiatics by their temperate climate.

In more modern times Estienne, in the *Apologie pour Herodote* (1566), objected to the exaggeration or deprecation of the importance of the achievements of the ancients, and observed that the moderns should not measure the ancients by their own standards, since the diversity of climate, government, and customs was so great. But Bodin, in *The Six Bookes of a Commonwealth*, developed the suggestion of the relation of climate and character more completely than any writer before Temple, setting down the differences in the people of the Northern, Middle, and Southern regions in terms not unlike those used by Temple in his comparison of the Dutch and English temperament.⁹⁰ Montaigne, whom Temple read with such appreciative attention, was impressed by the effect of climate on the unstable human spirit: "L'air mesme et la serenité du ciel nous apporte quelque mutation."⁹¹ And Charron made climate a primary factor in differentiating men.

La première plus notable et universelle distinction des hommes, qui regarde l'esprit et le corps, et tout l'estre de l'homme, se prend et tire de l'assiette divers du monde, selon laquelle le regard et l'influence du ciel et du soleil, l'air, le climat, le terroir sont divers.⁹²

Baudelot de Dairval, in *L'Utilité des Voyages* (1686), praised the study of books, but said that one must travel in order really to understand the world. "Le climat, les moeurs, et les singularitez de chaque païs sont les objets qu'il étudie lors qu'il veut enrichir sa memoire et éclairer son esprit."⁹³ In England the question of the effect of climate seems to have been discussed less than in France, though Barclay,⁹⁴ Cowley,⁹⁵ and Dryden⁹⁶ all throw out suggestion of this sort. Temple's insistence on the

importance of climate in the understanding of various civilizations comes, then, more from his contact, through reading and conversation, with French civilization, which at once intrigued and annoyed this *honnête homme*, who relished the polish and the cleverness of the Parisian *libre penseur*, and yet felt that he must justify his respect for the abused ancients, who had stated for him in such satisfactory terms so many of his moral beliefs as to the nature of man. Temple, therefore, borrowed the idea of the importance of climate from his opponents, and turned the notion against them by setting it in relation to his conception of the cyclic pattern of civilization, thus providing himself with grounds for saying that though men of the present are potentially as great as those of the past, their actual attainments are inferior.

Not only did Temple borrow the idea of climate from his distinguished adversaries, but he also used for his own purposes the suggestions made by Fontenelle and Perrault as to the effect of social environment on genius. For, though John Evelyn in an interesting letter to Sir Peter Wyche (1665), offered a number of explanations "of additions to, and the corruption of, the English language"⁹⁷ which reminds one of Temple's explanation of the general sterility of his age, it is in the writing of Perrault and Fontenelle themselves that one discovers the arguments Temple found so convenient to his uses. Evelyn thought that the state of the English language had proceeded

. . . from victories, plantations, frontieres, staples of com'erce, pedantry of schooles, affectation of travellers, translations, fancy and style of Court, vernility and mincing of citizens, pulpits, political remonstrances, theatres, shopps, etc.⁹⁸

Both Perrault and Fontenelle stressed the fact that, though knowledge is passed on from century to century, there are, nevertheless, certain periods when it seems to be forgotten; but, they said, it has only disappeared underground for a time to reappear again when circumstances are more happy. It is not strange, says Perrault, "que les Arts et les sciences s'évanoüissent pour un temps et qu'on voye regner en leur place l'ignorance et la barbarie,"⁹⁹ for when wars ravage the land, men are obliged to abandon studies in order to defend their lives. Civilization, like a river, flows for a time underground, and comes to the surface again.

Les ouvertures par où les Sciences et les Arts reviennent sur la Terre sont les regnes heureux des grands Monarques qui en rétablissant le calme et le repos dans leur Etats y font reffleurir toutes les belles connoissances.¹⁰⁰

Fontenelle perceived, too, that, though men might be potentially as great in one period as another, some ages are more propitious than others for their development—and this is exactly the thought pursued by Temple, with the conclusion that the time of the older civilizations was, indeed, more propitious than his own. It is amusing to observe that, not only the line of argument, but also the reasons Fontenelle offers in the following sentence for his belief are substantially those listed by Temple at the close of "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning." Nature, says Fontenelle,

. . . produit dans tous les siècles, des hommes propres à être de grands Hommes; mais les siècles ne leur permettent pas toujours d'exercer leur talens. Des inondations de Barbares, des Gouvernements ou absolument contraires, ou peu favorables aux Sciences et aux Arts, des prejugués et des fantaisies, qui peuvent prendre une infinité de formes différentes, . . . des guerres universelles, établissent souvent, et pour long-temps, l'ignorance et la mauvais goût. Joignez à cela toutes les diverses dispositions des fortunes particulières, et vous verrez combien la Nature sème en vain de Cicerons et de Virgiles dans le monde, et combien il doit être rare qu'il y en ait quelques une, pour ainsi dire, qui viennent à bien.¹⁰¹

Temple, adding to this list the increase of commerce, and therefore of materialism, could with the greatest ease, conclude that, for these same reasons, the productions of the men of his day were not up to those of the ancients, though the power of the human spirit was as great now as it ever was.

Temple, then, in his own circuitous way, called into question the two axioms of the moderns—first, that knowledge is accumulative, and second, that man does not vary from age to age and from country to country. By meditating upon the cyclic theory of the movement of civilizations, which he found expressed on every hand by theologians, scientists, and historians, Temple gained an almost poetic conception of the great age of the world and the childishness of the modern pretensions—a conception which harmonized with what, as a desultory moral philosopher, he had come to believe of our natural limitations

against which it is useless to struggle. To the suggestion that perhaps knowledge does not advance, but only moves in circles, Temple added the idea, hinted at by many writers but expressed most completely by his archenemies, Perrault and Fontenelle, that men vary enormously in different climates and environments, though in essentials they are unchanging.

Thus Temple, in striking out against his presumptuous contemporaries, who were coming to believe that they had overstepped the mark set by men of other periods, in science and in art, formulated a coherent and suggestive theory of civilization, based on his sense of the eternal rhythm of cultures which break over the human spirit, itself forever remaining the same, yet seeming to vary because of the differences in customs and manners in remote periods and countries. Though to the scientists and to the literary critics he seemed only an annoying voice issuing reactionary edicts from More Park, which unfortunately all the polite world listened to with attention, one cannot but be impressed by the originality of this never quite logical former ambassador, who approached the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns neither as a scientist nor as a writer of *belles lettres* but as a moral philosopher, and amateur historian, trying to see the question on a larger scale in terms of cultural fluctuations. Nor did this grave student of all that makes life easy and pleasant let the thought drop here; instead he pored over the volumes of voyagers and merchants, seeking, like the encyclopedists after him, for concrete evidence to support what would otherwise have remained only theory.

It is, therefore, difficult to decide whether to call Temple an "ancient," because he did not share the hope expressed in his day for the future progress of science and art, or a "modern," because he made free use of the new supply of material brought in by travelers in order to substantiate his theory that civilization has flourished in many places and periods besides seventeenth-century England and France. At least one can observe that Temple helped to vindicate the hope felt by Bacon, who had said:

Nor must it go for nothing that by the distant voyages and travels which have become frequent in our times, many things in nature have been laid open and discovered which may let in new light upon philosophy.¹⁰²

Temple, who usually found himself so impatient with members of the Royal Society, could sympathize with Glanvill's thought that

. . . by the gaining that mighty Continent, and the numerous fruitful Isles beyond the Atlantic, we have obtained a larger Field of Nature, and have thereby an advantage for more Phenomena, and more helps both for Knowledge and for Life . . .¹⁰³

a thought repeated by Sprat in his *History of the Royal Society* (1667),¹⁰⁴ and shared by Cowley, who, in formulating his plans for an ideal university, after the model suggested by Bacon in his *New Atlantis*, laid it down that four of the fellows should be constantly traveling, and sending reports of their observations back to England, as their predecessors, Bacon's "Merchants of Light," had done before them. It was this animated interest in the habits and beliefs of those races usually called barbarous that moved Locke, in 1683, to write to Thomas Cudworth, about to leave for India, asking him to find out for his satisfaction the truth about the jugglers there, how they were regarded by the Mahometans and the Brahmins, whether there were any apparitions in India, and, in short, "as much of the opinions, religion and ceremonies of the Hindoos and other heathens of those countries as comes in your way to learn and inquire."¹⁰⁵

Temple's participation in this seventeenth-century "esprit philosophique" makes one understand why Anthony Collins, in his *Discourse of Freethinking*, included him among the free-thinkers in a list with Erasmus, Descartes, Grotius, Hooker, Chillingworth, Faulkland, Herbert, Hobbes, Milton, Whichcote, Cudworth, More, and Locke. Temple, though in certain lines of thought quite out of sympathy with the progressive men of his day, as a philosopher of a *libertin* turn of mind offered fresh material to those who, in attempting to apply reason to religion, were casting curious eyes on all religions, in order to discover the few laws by which men live. As we have seen, what Temple was looking for in his study of China, Peru, Scythia, and Arabia, was what Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Hobbes, the Cambridge Platonists, and many others who were under the influence of rationalism, were attempting to discover—the law of nature which underlies all differences in customs and manners. To insist that "the learned adore the Spirit of

the world"¹⁰⁶ was perhaps as far as Temple, after all a cautious philosopher, dared go at that time of religious confusion, in his support of those who were concluding that all religions are akin. It was far enough to make Bishop Burnet say that Temple was a pagan rather than a Christian, a remark which probably the more advanced of his readers did not consider an insult at all.

For those who were attentive had been hearing, since the early part of the seventeenth century, expressions of the admiration felt by travelers to China for the teaching of Confucius, in which they discovered the moral philosophy so convenient to offer in defense of a belief in virtue and reason as opposed to the ritual of religion. Le Père Trigault, in 1616, said of the sect of Confucius:

L'intention finale de ceste secte de lettrez à laquelle tendent tous les preceptes de leur institution, est la paix publique et repos du peuple, l'oeconomie des familles, et la disposition particuliere de chacun à la vertu.¹⁰⁷

The disciples of Confucius, insisted this Jesuit father, explain "fort amplement" the Christian principle, do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Similarly Ricius, in *A Discourse of the Kingdome of China, . . . containyng the Country, People, Government, Religion, Rites, Sects, Characters, Studies, Arts, Acts, and a Map of China added*,¹⁰⁸ praised at some length the teaching of Confucius, who, "by example as well as precept exciting to vertue," was skilled in moral philosophy rather than logic. "And if wee marke his sayings and doings, wee must confesse few of our Ethnicke Philosophers before him, and many behinde."¹⁰⁹ In 1672 a Jesuit priest, Prosper Intorcetta, wrote a book on the views of Confucius called *Sinarum Scientia politico-moralis*, in which he said that, in China, "La nature raisonnable est ce que les hommes tiennent du Ciel, ce qui luy est conforme s'appelle la règle."¹¹⁰ Confucius recommended men to conquer "ses desires et soumettre à la raison,"¹¹¹ to love their neighbors, "obeir au Ciel," and, in fact, practice all those virtues which we customarily associate with the Christian religion. This idea of Chinese wisdom became even more general among freethinkers when, in 1686, a group of Jesuits who had traveled to China for the sole purpose of study published the teachings of Confucius in Latin—*Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*.

Temple refers to the Works of Confucius, “. . . or at least a part of them, which have lately in France been printed in the Latin tongue, with a learned preface, by some of the missionary Jesuits, under the title of the Works of Confutius.”¹¹² The “sagesse,” “prudence,” “piété,” “charité” of Confucius was frequently commented upon, after this date, by those who were remarking the similarities of all religions. Régis, in the *Journal des Savants* of 1687, said:

Je ne vois pas qu'au motif près la charité des Chinois soit différente de celle des chrétiens, tant il est vraie que Dieu a répandu dans l'esprit même des infidèles des lumières qui les conduisent à des vertus qui, quant à l'interieur de l'action, ne sont en rien différentes des vertus chrétiennes.¹¹³

And Bernier in the same journal the following year wrote that the Chinese, “qui n'avaient point d'autre lumières que leur lumières naturelles,”¹¹⁴ showed as much piety, charity, gentleness, prudence, and sincerity as the Christians. In 1688 appeared in Paris a book called *La Moral de Confucius*; and in the same year, a *Lettre sur la Moral de Confucius*, by Labrunie, and *Les douze excellences de la Chine*, by Mazalhaens. Fénelon wrote a dialogue between Confucius and Socrates, which, however, was not published until 1787, and Malebranche wrote, in 1688, an *Entretien d'un philosophe Chretien avec un philosophe Chinois*.¹¹⁵

Temple, sharing this growing interest on the part of the men who were looking to accounts of pagan beliefs for support of their religious freethinking, seems to have read with particular attention an elaborately illustrated study by John Nieuhoff of *An Embassy sent by the East-India Company of the United Provinces to the Grand Tartar Cham or Emperor of China*, which appeared at the close of his official duties at The Hague, in 1669. Though Temple, who was too casual and *honnête* in writing his essays to make many references to definite books, does not mention this imposing and popular study by name, his interest in the activities of the Dutch East India Company¹¹⁶ makes one suspect that he did not miss so important a publication. Moreover, Temple mentions among his authorities “persons employed thither upon trade, or embassies upon that occasion,”¹¹⁷ and in the same sentence refers to “Martinus

Kercherus," whose *China Monumentis* had appeared in Latin in 1667, and now for the first time is translated and published, almost in its entirety, as an Appendix to the elaborate study of China made by John Nieuhoff. That Temple actually used Kircher's account of his trip to China is probable, since he not only refers to Kircher by name, but also speaks of the journey of "Paulus Venetus" to China and of the "several missionary Friars and Jesuits" who "have upon devotion or command of their superiors, pierced with infinite pains and dangers through these vast and savage regions."¹¹⁸ Kircher discussed at length the difficulties of the land entrance Temple described, and, in chapter iii, mentioned "Marcus Paulus Venetus," listing the names he used for China and Peking in terms which Temple repeats.¹¹⁹

That Temple should follow Nieuhoff in the order in which he presented his material is not especially significant, since Temple, in his arrangement, seems to accept what almost became a formula for the writers of travel books—first, the physical geography of China; then the provinces, cities, and towns; the government; the religion; and finally any such notes on costumes, birds, trees, women, temples, reptiles, stones, canals, or tortures, as might strike the fancy of the author. But that he should follow Nieuhoff in such details as the number of capital cities and the number of smaller cities, is of some importance, since these figures vary enormously in all the accounts of China. In fact, all of Temple's details as to government correspond with those found in Part II, chapter i, of Nieuhoff's study, called "Of the Government, and the several Chief Officers in China." In this chapter there is a description of the learning required of those connected with the government, which corresponds with that of Temple;¹²⁰ an enumeration of the six councils and a statement of their functions; a description of the highest council, that of the six Coloas, which are usually numbered as twelve; and of the body of sixty philosophers, who are chosen from the two assemblies to advise the Emperor. Then follows an account of the provincial governments, which Temple, too, touches on briefly,¹²¹ and certain details of information, such as the fact that no one can hold office in his own province; that three years is the limit for any man to continue in office; that

citizens dress according to their rank—all of which Temple mentions.

Not only does Temple seem to follow Nieuhoff in the arrangement of his material and in the details of information he stresses, but, what is still more interesting, he finds in this lengthy account of the Chinese civilization, at that time so absorbing to him, the philosophical point of view he himself entertained. One wonders whether the verbal similarity of the two following passages, the first from Nieuhoff's study, and the second from that of Temple, could be mere accident. Nieuhoff, after stressing Confucius' preference for moral rather than natural philosophy, as Temple did also, analyzed the doctrine of the "Great Man":

. . . that everyone bring himself first to Perfection, and afterwards others, that so all may arrive to the possession of the *supremum bonum*, or highest good. But Perfection itself consists herein, that every person blow up the natural light in himself, and make it clear, so as he may *never erre from the Law of Nature* or from the Commands and Rudiments which are naturalized unto Man by that Law: And in regard the same cannot be done without an insight and inspection of things; therefore it is requisite that *Men should betake themselves to the study of Philosophy, whereby they may learn what is to be done and avoided*. By this knowledge, (say they) we are taught how to order our Affairs aright, and to rectifie our desires by the rule and square of reason: and *herein consists the Perfection of Body and Mind*.

. . . The first beginnings of this Perfection are said to arise from an intrinsick light, kindled by a diligent observation and scrutiny into the inward grounds and rules of natural things, and so *gradatim* brought to maturity. For the better accomplishing whereof, are presently added the means leading to this Perfection, consisting in Acts, as well of the Operation, as of the Will: The rule of both is called here reason, which is, that *we shall not desire, or will anything, but what is consonant to reason*. Lastly, the advantages are set forth that accrue thereby; and that a double *Perfection, of the body in the first place, and then of the mind*.¹²²

Temple, simplifying the passage, used many of the same phrases:

The chief principle he [Confucius] seems to lay down for a foundation and builds upon, is, that every man ought to study and endeavour

the improving and perfecting of his own natural reason to the greatest height he is capable, so as he may never (or as seldom as can be) *err and swerve from the law of nature . . . this . . . makes study and philosophy necessary*, which teaches men . . . *what is to be done and what is to be avoided. . . . That in this perfection of natural reason consists the perfection of body and mind, and the utmost or supreme happiness of mankind.* That the means and rules, to attain this perfection, are chiefly *not to will or desire anything but what is consonant to his natural reason.*¹²³

It seems likely, then, from Temple's interest in the Dutch East-India Company, to which he several times refers in his essays, from the fact that he says he uses for his sources accounts of China by Jesuit missionaries, ambassadors, and merchants and especially refers to Kircher, the translation of whose *China Monumentis* is in the Appendix of the study of China by Nieuhoff, from the arrangement of his ideas and information, and also from his use of words and phrases, that Temple actually did derive most of his material on China from *An Embassy sent by the East-India Company of the United Provinces to the Grand Tartar Cham or Emperor of China.*

But Temple's interest in China probably sprang from the enthusiasm for Confucius, which was already beginning to be felt by the freethinkers of France and England in his day. Whether Temple actually derived his material from Nieuhoff's study or from a dozen or more of the travel books then popular, it is at least clear that he was one of the first of the "philosophers" to use the new material brought into England by voyagers to substantiate his conception of the movement of civilization. In the accounts of China he found ample support for his idea that civilization flourished in many times and places and that men in their moral sense are fundamentally the same.

As Temple was following with absorption the latest information he could get about the Chinese, which offered his meditative mind so much material for further speculation, so was his leisurely retirement made more pleasant by the books on Peru which found their way to More Park. Temple says with delight:

I never met with any story so entertaining, as the relations of the several learned Spanish Jesuits and others, concerning these countries and people, in their native innocence and simplicity.¹²⁴

The conquest of Peru by the Spaniards in the sixteenth century, the enormous wealth brought back to Spain by these early conquerors, and the later proselyting of Mexico and Peru kept this part of the world vividly before the eyes of Europe of the seventeenth century. Temple, whose interest in Spanish civilization had been sufficiently stirred during his stay at The Hague to make him learn to read and write the Spanish language, might have found accounts of the primitive savagery of the natives before the appearance of Mango Copac and his sister, of the later splendor and glory of the Inca civilization and its abrupt decline, in almost any of the accounts of Peru which were published in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Castillo's *True History of the Conquest of New Spain*, of which the exact date is not known, came out in the early sixteenth century. It was followed by Valera's *Historia del Peru* (1596); Gamboa's *History of the Incas* (1615); Villalobus' *Obediencia que Mexico* (1623); and Montesinos' *Memorias Antiquas Historiales del Peru* (c. 1628). In *Purchas His Pilgrimage* there are five accounts of Mexico, among them *Mexican Antiquities gathered out of the Writings of Josephus Acosta*, "a learned Jesuit," to whom Temple refers.¹²⁵ Almost all of these accounts describe first the savagery of the early tribes, and then the change brought about by Mango Copac, or Mango Capa, as his name is frequently written. These original Incas are variously reported as two brothers, seven brothers, a sister and brother, or a husband and wife, and the accounts of their activities, including that given by Acosta whom Temple says he read, are brief and casual. Every author repeats every other author, it seems, as does Fontenelle in *De l'Origine des Fables*:

Selon les traditions du Pérou, l'Ynce Manco Guyna Capac, fils du soleil, trouva moyen par son éloquence de retirer du fond des forêts les habitants du pays qui y vivoient à la manière des bêtes, et il les fit vivre sous des loix raisonnables.¹²⁶

Probably the ultimate source of most of the comments made by such philosophers as Fontenelle and Temple, was the widely read study of the Incas made by Garcilasso de la Vega, the son of a Spanish explorer and an Inca princess. The first part of the book was originally published at Lisbon in 1609, the second part in 1617. An abridged English edition translated by

Paul Rycaut, was published in England in 1688, just at the time when Temple was preparing his essay "Of Heroic Virtue." This study of Peru, not only the most picturesque, but also the richest in information and moral reflections, must have been a real influence on Temple's thought at this period.

That Garcilasso de la Vega should return to Peru, after a few years in Spain, and piece together from oral accounts the history of a civilization which possessed no written records was interesting to Temple, since he was attempting to show that many cultures have developed and prospered, sunk, and left no trace behind. Garcilasso, when he returns to Peru, questions his uncle:

Ynca, my Uncle, you have no writings which preserve the memory of past events; but what accounts have you of the origin of our Kings? . . . you, who have no books, what memory have you preserved respecting your ancestors?¹²⁷

Temple, in his "Essay on the Ancient and Modern Learning," twice refers to the lack of documents concerning Peruvian civilization, in order to illustrate his sense of the unrecorded cultures which have come and gone:

For how long nations without the changes introduced by conquest, may continue in the same customs, institutions and opinions, will be easily observed in the stories of the Peruvians, and Mexicans.¹²⁸

And again:

So in Mexico and Peru, before the least use or mention of letters, there was remaining among them the knowledge of what had passed in those mighty nations and governments for many ages.¹²⁹

Not only does Temple incorporate into his thinking the sense that the history of many civilizations, like that of the Peruvians, has never been told, but he also borrows from Garcilasso his elaborate account of the appearance of Mango Copac and his sister among the savage tribes, their moral instructions, and their method of organizing the government. Temple's account tallies with that of Garcilasso almost point by point. After describing at length the savagery of the tribes, Garcilasso recounts, as Temple does after him,¹³⁰ the story of how "our Father the Sun," taking pity on the human race, sent a son and daughter to the earth, "to give them precepts and laws by which

to live as reasonable and civilised men,"¹³² and to teach them how to build houses, cultivate crops, tend flocks, and wear clothes. Then the Sun said to Mango Copac and his sister, expressing one of Temple's favorite ideas:

"When you have reduced these people to our service, you shall maintain them in habits of reason and justice, by the practice of piety, clemency, and meekness, assuming in all things the office of a pious father towards his beloved and tender children."¹³²

Mango Copac instructed his subjects "in the ways of polite and brotherly companionship, in conformity with reason and law of nature,"¹³³ and finally

. . . when the Ynca grew old, he ordered his principal vassals to assemble in the city of Cuzco, and said to them, in a solemn discourse, that he should soon return to heaven to rest with his father the Sun, who had called him. . . .¹³⁴

even as the Sun called home Temple's Mango Copac, several years later.

It seems likely, then, that Temple, who delighted in tales of the Incas, read Garcilasso's account of that fascinating people, since he seems to follow his interpretation of the mythical history of the origins of the Incas both in emphasis and in the details he gives. At least it is certain that the interesting accounts of the new world, which were appearing during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, were used by Temple as examples to support his idea that the question of "progress" was a more complicated one than some of the "moderns" seemed to think. Here was news of a remarkable and elaborate civilization, of which there were no written records; here were further indications of the fact that certain fundamental moral laws operate in all sorts of human society though their customs, government, and religious observances might be very different.

Having, then, found support in China and Peru for the notion of how greatness has come and gone on the face of the world, Temple looked to descriptions of "those northern regions" for further proof of the height to which other peoples, not familiar to the bigoted "modern," had risen. But here his problem was more difficult than in the case of China and Peru, for Temple stood at the very beginning of the interest in the

Gothic which swept over the eighteenth century. He turned, therefore, to "the relations of Justin concerning the Scythian empire,"¹³⁵ and to Herodotus, who could tell him that in certain parts of Scythia men lived in carts and fed on the milk of mares¹³⁶—items not quite sufficient to suggest an explanation of the greatness Temple felt must be there. Nor did he receive much light from the numerous accounts of Greenland, Spitzbergen, the North Sea, and Iceland, which had appeared during the seventeenth century. Eleven such reports by voyagers into the north were published by Purchas. In 1630 appeared Edward Pellham's book, *God's Power and Providence: showed in the Miraculous Preservation and Deliverance of Eight Englishmen, Left by Mischance in Greenland*; in 1650, *An Account of a Most Dangerous Voyage Performed by the Famous Captain John Monch*; in 1674, *A New Voyage into the Northern Countries*, by Pierre Martin de la Martinière. Such accounts, though they fed the popular curiosity about these regions, supplied scant material for a philosopher interested in the habits and ideas of a remote people. Verstegan's *Restitution of Decayed Intelligence* (1605), in which the author tried to prove, by arguments both reasonable and unreasonable, that the English came originally from Germany, might have offered more to Temple's uses. Indeed, Verstegan, in chapter iii, "Of the ancient manner of lyving of our Saxon ancestors," described the government, religion, military tactics, and learning of these tribes as Temple did later, but there is no evidence that Verstegan's book was actually known to Temple. Similarly there is only a very general connection with Johannes Scheffer's study of Lapland, which came out in Paris in 1673, and was translated into English the following year—*Histoire de la Laponie, Sa Description, L'Origine, Les Moeurs, La Maniere de vivre de ses Habitants, leur Religion, leur Magie et les choses rares du Pais*.

But from "Olaus Wormius," who by his *Literatura Runica* Temple felt, "has very much deserved from the commonwealth of learning,"¹³⁷ and from Snorri, whose translation of the Edda Temple quoted, he was able to work up a sense of the artistic powers of these tribes, about which so little was then known. Ole Worm published, in 1636, what Temple referred to as *Lit-*

Antiquissima vulgo Gothica dicta, in the appendix to which is found the Epicedium of Rednor Ladbrog, from which Temple quoted two verses. It is clear that Temple derived much of his information about this form of poetry from Worm's study of runes, for Worm not only prints the runes with interlinear Latin translations, but also explains the meters and the variety of verses as Temple does in his essay "Of Poetry." Sturlason Snorri's prose Edda appeared for the first time in Copenhagen in 1665, under the title, *Edda Islandorum An. Chr MCCXV Islandice Conscripta Per Snorronem sturlae, nunc primum islandice, danice, et latine ex antiquis codicibus in lucem prodit opera et studio, P. F. Resenii*, and this Temple quoted¹³⁸ when he described the migrations of the Goths under Odin. Temple may also have used for his information about Woden, and for his remarks on runes, Robert Sheringham's *De Anglorum Gentis Origine Disceptatio* (1670).¹³⁹ Sheringham selects the two stanzas of the Epicedium of Rednor Ladbrog which Temple uses, except that he omits the last four lines of stanza XXV, which Temple perhaps supplies from Worm. Sheringham also gives Temple's excerpts from the Edda.¹⁴⁰ Aylett Sammes quoted the same two stanzas of Rednor Ladbrog in his *Britannia Antiqua Illustrata* (1676), and also the verse from Lucan used by Temple as well.¹⁴¹ Sammes's translation of Rednor Ladbrog is quite different from that given by Temple, but the lines from Lucan correspond exactly. Sammes also, before he quotes the two stanzas from Rednor Ladbrog, describes the conception of death held by the Goths,¹⁴² which so impressed Temple, on the lookout for evidences of the greatness of these strange people.

That Temple should have been aware of the prose Edda and runic literature, and that he should have tried to reinterpret the Scythian civilization in the light of the new material supplied by Worm, Snorri, Sheringham, and Sammes, indicates that he, among the first of the "philosophers," saw that the "northern region," about which so little was known at that time, was well worth further thought.

If Temple had difficulty in constructing from the scant material at hand a picture of the greatness of the northern tribes, he was embarrassed by the wealth of information as to "the original and progress" of the picturesque Saracen empire,

which, he pointed out, "have been easily observed, and are most vulgarly known, having been the subject of many modern writers, and several well-digested histories or relations."¹⁴³ Indeed, from the time of Sir Thomas Roe's account of his embassy to the court of the Great Mogul (1615-19), to the *Travels of Sir John Chardin into Persia and Ye East Indies through the Black Sea* (1686), elaborate and often fantastical accounts of Persia, Arabia, India, and Turkey—all of which Temple calls "Saracen"—were pouring into England. Ten accounts of the countries of the east appear in *Purchas His Pilgrimage*, and in most of them can be found references to the Mohammedan religion, to the cruelty and power of the rulers, such as Temple uses. One of the more elaborately edited and widely read travel relations was Thomas Herbert's, with the following title—a very adequate description of the contents of the book: *Some Yeares Travels into Divers Parts of Asia and Afrique*, "Describing especially the two famous Empires, the Persian and Great Mogull: weaved with the History of these later Times. As also, many rich and spacious Kingdomes in the Orientall India, and other parts of Asia: Together with the adjacent Iles, severally relating the Religion, Language, Qualities, Customes, Habit, Descent, Fashions, and other Observations touching them" (1638). In 1656-88 appeared François Bernier's *Travels in the Mogul Empire*, which Temple says he has read and enjoyed. Another publication of an impressive sort is that entitled, *The Voyages and Travels of the Ambassadors sent by Frederick Duke of Holstein to the Great Duke of Muscovy and the King of Persia*, "Containing a compleat History of Muscovy, Tartary, Persia, and other adjacent Countries in VII Books, whereto are added, The Travels of John Albert de Mendelslo (a Gentleman belonging to the Embassy) from Persia into the East-Indies, containing a particular Description of the Indosthan, the Mogul's Empire, the Oriental Ilands, Japan, China etc., and the Revolutions which happened in those Countries within these few Years" (1662). These are only a few of the accounts of the parts of the world so vividly interesting to the seventeenth century, not only because of their exotic appeal, but also for commercial, political, and religious reasons.¹⁴⁴

As to which of the "many modern writers and several well-digested histories or relations" gave Temple the material he

needed for his confused and inaccurate account of the Saracen empire one would certainly hesitate to say. Judging from the vague and casual manner in which Temple, who after all perfectly understood that in these matters one should not exert oneself too far, compiled his account of this region, one would guess that he used no single source, but relied on his general fund of information, gathered together through conversation as well as books. The institution of the Janizaries, for instance, so much admired by Temple, is touched on at least by almost every report of this empire. Francis Osborn, in his *Politically Reflections upon the Government of the Turks* (1656), tries to analyze the sources of the Turkish strength, indeed, just as Temple does, and points out that the Mohammedan religion makes for a strong centralized power; that all the articles of this creed—abstinence from wine, belief in a sensual paradise, obedience to the sultan as a descendant of Mohammed—increased the civic and military power of the country. But there is no real indication that Temple derived his idea of the power of the Turks from Osborn.

It is more probable that Temple was indebted to the series of histories of Turkey begun in 1610 by Richard Knolles, and continued until after Temple's death by Paul Rycaut. For these famous histories, the most complete to appear during Temple's life, contain all the historical information used by Temple, whose attempt to explain the rise of this empire is not unlike that made by Knolles in his preface:

But to come nearer unto the causes of the Turkes greatnesse . . . first in them is to be noted an ardent and infinite desire of soveraigntie. . . . Then, such a rare unitie and agreement amongst them, as well in the manner of their religion, (if it be so to be called) as in matters concerning their state . . . their frugalitie and temperatnesse in their diet, and other manner of living, their strait observing of their antient militarie discipline, their cheerful and almost incredible obedience unto their Princes and Sultans . . . all great causes why their Empire hath so mightily encreased and so long continued.¹⁴⁵

In 1687 Knolles's *Historie of the Turkes* was published again, this time with *The History of the Turkish Empire From the Year 1623 to the Year 1677*, by Paul Rycaut, added to the second volume and also *The Memoirs of Sir Paul Rycaut Continu-*

ing the *History of the Turks from the Year 1660 to the Year 1678*. The interesting thing about the first of these two additions by Rycaut is that he supplies exactly the information as to the mutiny of the Janizaries, the death of Ibrahim, the rise of the Bassa of Aleppo and his murder, given by Temple in one of the few detailed paragraphs which this casual writer treats us to.¹⁴⁶ And Rycaut assures his reader that this information was "never before published in the English tongue."¹⁴⁷ The insurrection of the Janizaries, the death of Ibrahim, the succession of his seven-year-old son, and the continued difficulties of the Janizaries, are all described in great detail by Rycaut, and these Temple summarizes in his account of the collapse of the Ottoman power. Moreover, at the end of Volume II of the 1687 edition of Knolles's *Historie of the Turkes*, Rycaut adds a section to his *Memoirs*, called *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire containing the Maxims of the Turkish Polity*, in which he mentions and elaborates upon each of the eight points cited by Temple as an explanation of the power of Turkey:¹⁴⁸ their religion; their belief in the divinity of the Sultan; their restricted education; their method of dividing land and honors; the training and moral code of the Janizaries.¹⁴⁹ Though one cannot be sure that Temple actually found the material for his analysis of the strength of the Turkish Empire in Rycaut's account of *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, it is at least interesting that such an elaborate study had recently been made when Temple turned his mind to a contemplation of this extraordinary empire which had not many years before threatened to overrun Europe.

Though Temple, whose business after all was politics, could not but be interested in the government and military tactics of this people who as late as 1683 had stormed Vienna, one suspects that it was Mohammed, a member of the brotherhood of Epicurus, Socrates, and Confucius, who really encouraged Temple to think that even in the beliefs of this enemy to all of Europe he might find grounds for thinking that there is a basic similarity between the so-called pagan ideas and the Christian creed. Temple maintained his mildly tolerant attitude toward Mohammed in the face of a quite violent prejudice against this exotic eastern moralist. In 1606 one finds a condemnation of his teaching in *The Bondage and Travels of Johann Schilther-*

ger, and similarly in *A New and Large Discourse of the Travels of Sir Anthonie Sherley, Knight, by Sea and over Land to the Persian Empire* (1601). Knolles, in the first edition of his *Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1610), referred to the "most grosse and blasphemous doctrine" of the "false prophet Mahomet, borne in an unhappy houre. to the great destruction of mankind."¹⁵⁰ In 1625 appeared a full and violently prejudiced account of Mohammedanism—*Histoire Generale de la Religion des Turcs, Avec la Naissance, la Vie, la Mort, de leur Prophete Mahomet*, by Michel Baudier. Herbert, in *Some Yeares Travels into Divers Parts of Asia and Afrique* (1638), describes Mohammed, "whose name Arabically signifies Deceit";¹⁵¹ Peter Heylyn, in *A Little Description of the Great World* (1639), gives an account of the life of Mohammed and his teaching, emphasizing the fact that sensual liberty is allowed in this world and the next. In 1649, the Sieur du Ryer, Lord of Malezair, translated the *Alcoran* into French, and his translation was immediately turned into English, "for the satisfaction of all that desire to look into Turkish vanities," the translator explains "To the Reader," ". . . so viewing thine enemies in their full body, thou mayest the better prepare to encounter and I hope overcome them." In 1686 Monsieur de Thevenot, in his *Travels into the Levant*, attempts to describe the manners, government, language, and religion of Turkey, Persia, and the East Indies, and repeats the popular view of Mohammedanism, when he says, "The Turks Religion is so full of fopperies and absurdities that certainly it is to be wondered at that it hath so many followers."¹⁵² And Rycaut, in *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, turns upon his reader with the complacent remark:

If, (Reader), the Superstition, Vanity, and ill-foundation of the Mahometan Religion seem fabulous, as a Dream, or the Fancies of a distracted and wild Brain, thank God that thou wert born a Christian, and within the Pale of an Holy and an Orthodox Church.¹⁵³

One cannot but notice the respectful tone with which Temple, interested in the beliefs of all races, speaks of what was universally considered a rather base form of religion. After enlarging upon the peculiarities of this creed, he explains that Mohammed did, nevertheless, believe in "one God creator of the world."¹⁵⁴ The parts of his teaching, which even to Temple, looked "like

a wild fanatic rhapsody," only indicate, he mildly remarks, ". . . the strange difference of conceptions among men."¹⁵⁵

The rise and partial collapse of this threatening Saracen empire was too recent for Temple really to perceive the significant aspects of its cycle. But he attempts, nevertheless, to understand the impressive development of this empire by means of ambassadorial reports, histories, and travelers' accounts, to interpret its religion and moral ideas, which, though he does not commend them, at least do not horrify this freethinker so much as they do most of his contemporaries. Temple tries, if quite inadequately, to view this latest drama of the rise and fall of civilizations as another illustration of

the uncertaintie of worldly things, which subject to perpetuall change, cannot long stay in one state, but as the sea is with the wind, so are they in like sort tossed up and down with the continual surges and waves of alteration and change, so that being once growne to their height, they there stay not long, but fall againe as fast as ever they rise, and so in time come to nothing.¹⁵⁶

The attitude of this easy-going man of the world toward the Quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns, then, cannot be understood if one considers only his opinion of the "new science," the importance of which he did not in the least understand. One must realize that Temple, never the most disciplined of thinkers, failed to distinguish between the knowledge which can be accumulated and passed on from generation to generation—scientific knowledge, in short—and that which is rediscovered by each age and each individual, called by Temple "moral knowledge." To Temple, who had read his "ancients," and brushed up against the skeptical libertine thinkers of The Hague, this "moral knowledge," or wisdom, was all that men should aspire to, since to this discreet son of Epicurus the whole aim of life was the achievement of a certain "happiness," based on a few permanent moral axioms, which are alike for all men in all times. It was from the aloof position of moral philosopher that Temple, in the privacy of his garden, contemplated the proposition that men have improved since the time of the "ancients." In formulating his answer to the current belief, Temple turned into a student of the history of the human race, and suggested a certain theory of the cyclic movement of civilizations, hinted at

by many English thinkers, support for which he found in the numerous studies of foreign countries then appearing in England. Temple developed this idea—that men do not progress, but are much the same in all ages and places, varying only with differences in climate and social conditions—so that in suggestiveness the conception extends far beyond the limits of the controversy between the defenders of the classical and the upholders of the modern civilization. On the basis of this hypothesis as to the rise and fall of cultures, Temple maintained not that the ancients were superior to the moderns, but that the moderns were not superior to the ancients, since men do not change, though customs vary. Temple, in the true Baconian spirit, illustrated and enlarged this conception, by turning to the supply of new material introduced to the reading public by travelers, merchants, and ambassadors. This moralizing historian found, among the accounts of the Chinese, Peruvian, Scythian, and Arabian civilizations which had made their way down to the remote retreat of More Park, concrete examples of his cherished thought that perfection is not permanently attained in one place or one period, but is approached now in this part of the world, now in that, only to depart again, leaving few if any signs of greatness behind for men to marvel at. “The thing that has been, is that which shall be, and there is no new thing under the sun.’”

CHAPTER III

THE CRITIC

TEMPLE'S approach to the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns was not that of the scientist attempting to prove that modern thought had gone beyond the limits of the classical mind, and could progress still further only if the weight of antiquity be thrown off, but rather that of the curious "philosopher," interested in understanding the rise and fall of civilizations, the similarity of men in different ages and places beneath their superficial differences. Nor did Temple consider the literary discussions of his day as a critic primarily, but, instead, as an inquiring *libre penseur* and student of civilizations, whose answers to critical questions were, in a way, an extension, into the realm of literature, of his moral philosophy. For Temple was, before all else, the polished and rather weary Epicurean, who, after a lifetime of conversation and casual reading, finally retired to his garden to discover how most pleasantly to adorn "the leisure of an idle man." "I must confess," wrote this country gentleman, who would never willingly be found in the company of a pedant, "that the critics are a race of scholars I am very little acquainted with."¹

Therefore in pondering those questions of literary theory which as an *honnête homme* of the late seventeenth century he could not help considering, he referred back in his mind to certain basic philosophical—or, to use his term, "moral"—beliefs, as we have seen was his habit when meditating the meaning of civilization. But it was as a "private spirit," rather than as a former ambassador studying the fortunes of nations, that Temple thought of the place of art in a man's life. Like Montaigne, Bacon, Browne, and other liberal thinkers before and since, Temple was a supporter of public virtues which were not in perfect harmony with what as a skeptical philosopher in the privacy of his study he recommended to himself and the other *illuminati*. It is not surprising, then, to find that as a respected diplomat, enlarging upon the social causes for the fluctuations of cultures, he stressed the reasonableness of men, while as a *libertin* meditating problems of aesthetics his thoughts were

more concerned with the "passions" of man. The idea, therefore, that men never have been and probably never will be capable of living according to reason, but must play off one desire against another, as anyone who understands the art of living knows, is the thought underlying Temple's answers to the three most important questions of literary criticism considered by him in his seclusion—whether the aim of literature is to delight the reader or to improve him; whether genius is free to create according to its own laws or is bound by traditional literary rules, and, finally, whether it is possible to judge literature according to any fixed critical standards, true for all times, and all places.

I.

As to the first of these questions, Temple could no more think that the end of literature was merely instruction than he could believe the end of life, for him at least, was moral action. A belief in the didactic purpose of literature, this *libre penseur* referred to, therefore, in a bored and perfunctory manner:

. . . the chief end seems to have been instruction, and under the guise of fables, or the pleasure of story, to shew the beauties and the rewards of virtue, the deformities and misfortunes or punishment of vice; by examples of both to encourage one, and deter men from the other; to reform ill customs, correct ill manners, and moderate all violent passions.²

But, he adds wearily,

To go further upon this subject would be to tread so beaten paths, that, to travel in them only raises dust, and is neither of pleasure nor of use.³

To such a delicate adept in the art of enjoying retirement as Temple, this external, moral, rationalistic manner of conceiving of the purpose of literature was wholly unsympathetic. Feeling, in the privacy of his mind, not at all certain as to an underlying plan of the universe—a belief in which he nevertheless by implication recommended in his "surveys" of civilizations—Temple could not hold with the idea that the purpose of art is to point out this reasonable moral scheme. To Temple the aim of life was happiness; the justification of literature or art, then,

was that, in a subtle way, it should help men to achieve this desirable end. In listing the attainments of the ancients and the moderns, which "must be either of general use or pleasure to mankind," Temple placed poetry among the pleasures, together with pictures, statuary, eloquence, architecture. He counted it another testimony of the "wit and science" of the ancients,

. . . that their very luxury was learned, in the disposition, order, and variety of their feasts; so contrived, as to entertain not only the senses, but the imagination and intellectuals too; by perfumes, music, mimic, both dumb and vocal; short scenes, and representations, buffooneries, or comical disputes to divert the company.⁴

Temple, one notices, did not even mildly suggest in this passage—which indicates so pleasantly his conception of the "learned pleasures" of the ancients—that art was ever meant to be more than a refined and rather intellectual recreation.

As Temple gracefully refused to join the ranks of those who, in France and England, subscribed to the didactic conception of the function of art, so did he also, in his answer to the question as to whether genius is free to create according to its own laws, avoid the stricter, more dogmatic point of view. For when Temple meditated on the relation of "art" and "nature" in the poet's creative process, he did not do so in an external, theoretical way. He looked upon the tension between control and spontaneity in art as related to the balance of "reason" and "passion" in ethics, which was at the basis of his sense of moral harmony. The familiar cant of his day on this much argued subject struck him, therefore, as peculiarly irritating. "Neither general rules, nor general practice [are] to be found further than notion."⁵ "I do not here intend to make a further critic upon poetry," he said, in his essay, "Of Poetry," "which were too great a labour," for this casual critic,

. . . nor to give rules for it, which were so great a presumption: besides, there has been so much paper blotted upon these subjects, in this curious and censoring age, that 'tis all grown tedious or repetition. The modern French wits (or pretenders) have been very severe in their censures, and exact in their rules, I think to very little purpose. . . .⁶

Though Temple was impatient of the aesthetic cant of his "censoring age," he none the less, as a sophisticated critic of

the Restoration, was aware of the clash between "art" and "nature," a clash which he saw reflected not only in literature, but also in "the work upon the best Indian gowns, or the painting upon their best skreens or purcellans," and in gardens, which must be "in some sort regular," and yet occasionally might be in "forms wholly irregular that may, for aught I know, have more beauty than any of the others," due to "some great race of fancy or judgment in the contrivance." But moderation must be preserved in the amount of money spent on a garden, as well as in the plan of its terraces and borders, for "if there want sense in proportion to money, or if nature be not followed," all is lost—"which I take to be the great rule in this, and perhaps in every thing else, as far as the conduct not only of our lives, but our government."

It is not surprising, then, that Temple, who attempted to relate his conception of these balanced opposites in art to "reason" and "passion" in life, should, in the course of his essays, state the case both for natural genius and the conscious artist. Genius, he says with emphasis, "can never be produced by any art or study, by pains or by industry." It is, therefore, generally agreed "to be the pure and free gift of Heaven or of nature, and to be a fire kindled out of some hidden spark of the very first conception."⁸ Genius—in origin somewhat mysterious to this belated Renaissance critic—can never be confined to rules; those who make such an attempt, the French critics notably, are mistaken, for "The truth is, there is something, in the genius of poetry, too libertine to be confined to so many rules; and whoever goes about to subject it to such constraints loses both its spirit and grace. . . ." As bees must range through fields and gardens, choosing the flowers they please "by properties and scents they only know and distinguish," as they must themselves build their cells "with admirable art," extracting the honey "with infinite labour,"⁹ so must poets be free to choose their own material, and encouraged to arrange it according to certain inner laws, which no rules can teach.

And yet Temple was not for license in poetry any more than he was for eccentricity in behavior or irregularity in gardens. "Bluntness and plainness in a Court, the most refined breeding. Like something in a dress that looks neglected, and yet is very exact,"¹⁰ he jotted down in his notebook. Similarly in poetry:

"Besides the heat of invention and liveliness of wit, there must be the coldness of good sense and soundness of judgment, . . . to chuse among infinite productions of wit and fancy."¹¹ Temple never proposed specific rules which a poet must follow in order to avoid an excess disagreeable in art, but he insisted that there was a certain unescapable analogy between discipline and training in life and care and finish in art, since "all great and good things in the world are brought to pass by care and order."¹² Though genius is the source of poetry,

. . . yet this child is, like all others, born naked, and must be nourished with care, clothed with exactness and elegance, educated with industry, instructed with art, improved by application, corrected with severity, and accomplished with labour and with time, before it arrives at any great perfection or growth.¹³

It seemed to this moral skeptic that neither in literature nor in life are there exact rules to guide one, but that, in attempting to achieve "perfection" in either, one must hold to a difficult balance between impulse and restraint. To write poetry, as well as to lead "the good life," "There must be a great agitation of mind to invent, a great calm to judge and correct; there must be, upon the same tree, and at the same time, both fruit and flower."¹⁴ Temple, whose comments on literature from his retreat in Surrey always bore the imprint of his discreetly libertine point of view, did not sympathize with those who insisted upon the classical rules for the guidance of the poet, any more than with those who thought that the real purpose of poetry was to improve the reader by moral lessons.

But his tentative effort to find a more liberal basis for judging literature than that of the classicist—though it is nowhere expressed as a definite creed—is perhaps his most suggestive contribution to a freer criticism. Temple's way of considering literature, as one of those pleasures which ease men through a difficult life, suggests that his escape from the "old common notions" of how to judge a book was not difficult to make. For a man who feels that the pursuits of his fellows are all of them "baubles besides old wood to burn, old wine to drink, old friends to converse with, and old books to read"¹⁵ is more eager to enjoy the "old books" which are able to distract him, than to interrupt the pleasant rhythm of his hour by condemning those

which do not. Temple, who so thoughtfully tasted his wines, his garden, his friends, and his books, and who felt that no absolute good was to be found in any of these pleasures, was by temperament more absorbed by the process of making nice discriminations, than of coming to final judgments.

He did not, therefore, argue as to what should be allowed in literature, but instead listed his preferences among the books which pleased him. These are the authors he enjoyed—one cannot but be struck by the fact that almost all of the great names he chose stand for a freedom of outlook, in one direction or another, which one would not expect to find on the list of an authentic upholder of tradition.

The great wits among the moderns have been, in my opinion, and in their several kinds of the Italians, Boccace, Machiavel, and Padro Paole; among the Spaniards, Cervantes (who wrote *Don Quixote*), and Guevara, among the French, Rabelais and Montaigne; among the English, Sir Philip Sidney, Bacon and Selden. . . . The modern French are Voiture, Rochfaucalt's *Memoirs*, Bussy's *Amours de Gaul*, with several other little relations or memoirs that have run this age, which are very pleasant and entertaining.¹⁶

Saint-Évremond, who, like Temple, confessed, “. . . je cherche plus dans les livres ce qui me plaît que ce qui m'instruit,”¹⁷ shared several of these tastes with his friend, with whom it is probable he talked over books in Will's Coffee House or in the boudoir of Madame Mazarin. The essays of Montaigne and the works of Voiture, Saint-Évremond said, “se sont établis comme un droit de me plaire toute ma vie.” He referred to *Don Quixote* as a book “que je puis lire toute ma vie, sans en être dégoûté un seul moment.”¹⁸

But Temple's list of prose preferences not only suggests the individuality of his literary pleasures; it is indicative, too, of Temple's interest in the cultures of various countries. His remark, in the same paragraph, on the qualities of the French language shows that he was attentive to national characteristics in literature as well as in his fellow diplomats. Of languages in general Temple observed, “the more they are filed and polished, the less they have of weight and of strength,” and as the French language “has much more fineness and smoothness at this time, so I take it to have had much more force, spirit and compass,

in Montaigne's day."¹⁹ Temple's persistent interest in the language, the customs, the ideas of men of different countries and different periods he carried over to his sense of a possible basis for literary judgments which would be more objective than personal taste, important as that always remains to this discerning egoist. Though he was not, as far as one can see, quite aware of the relation of his ideas on the fluctuations of culture and the permanency of man, to a notion of aesthetic judgments not purely subjective, his thought, nevertheless, was tending in that direction. Not only his criticism of the French language, which seemed to him refined to a degree "that cannot be well exceeded,"²⁰ and his immediate appreciation of the poetic quality of the songs of "the northern regions,"²¹ but also his profound sense of the age of the world, over which so many civilizations had passed, contributed toward a "historical" view of literature, which remains the approach familiar to us today. Temple's *Introduction to the History of England* (1695), suggests that, casual as his efforts were, he at least tried to find explanations of what he saw about him by an appeal to something other than "standards" existing only in the observing mind. After Temple, in his *History*, had "beaten through all the rough and dark Ways of this Journey"²² up to modern times, as far as the Norman Conquest, he gave up the struggle. But the interesting thing to us is that he should have been moved to attempt to trace the history of England, ". . . from the first Originals, as far as I could find any Ground of probable Story, or of fair Conjecture, since Philosophers tell us, that none can be said to know things well, who does not know their Beginnings."²³

Temple's quite elaborately developed analysis of English humor is a striking example of his effort to transfer this historical approach to a definite literary problem. Interested as he was in knowing things "in their Beginnings," and in gathering further evidence for his sense of the forces which make national cultures, he referred to these ideas when he attempted to explain what seemed to him the unique quality of the English comedies—the ideas that though men in all places and ages are fundamentally the same, they nevertheless vary in their individual expressions because of the climate and social conditions. Such a conception, applied to literary judgments, meant a re-

pudiation of the classicists' method of measuring art by the standards of Greece and Rome, and an acceptance of the idea that the uniqueness of a national culture is, in fact, more interesting than its similarity to that of the classical period; that the differences in individuals are as important to observe as their sameness; and, finally, that the critic's function is not to judge, but to explain these phenomena by reference to geography and history, rather than to abstract standards of literature.

Temple himself did not realize the implications of his way of analyzing the humor of English comedy. He was attracted to the question of the humor of his countrymen, because he saw in it a distinguishing characteristic of the English. "Yet I am deceived," he wrote, "if our English has not in some kind excelled both the modern and the ancient, which has been by force of a vein natural perhaps to our country, and which with us is called humour, a word peculiar to our language too. . . ." ²⁴ But reading his remarks more than two hundred years later one is struck by the fact that the reasons he offers for this vein of humor in his countrymen are those which make up the stock in trade of every social critic since that time. Temple thinks there might be

. . . a greater variety of humour in the picture, because there is a greater variety in the life. This may proceed from the native plenty of our soil, the unequalness of our climate, as well as the ease of our government, and the liberty of professing opinions and factions, which perhaps our neighbors may have about them, but are forced to disguise, and thereby they may come in time to be extinguished. Plenty begets wantonness and pride, wantonness is apt to invent, and pride scorns to imitate: liberty begets stomach or heart, and stomach will not be constrained . . . we have more humour, because every man follows his own, and takes a pleasure, perhaps a pride to shew it. ²⁵

In countries where the people are poor and forced to work for stern masters, men are prone to imitate, "they seem all of a sort in their habits, their customs, and even their talk and conversation." But the economic prosperity of England and the liberality of her government, as well as the very air her people breathe, tend to produce "more sharpness of wit, more pleasantness of humour, more range of fancy, more penetration of thought" in the English, than in men of any other nation. But

in no other country are there "so many disputes upon religion, so many reasoners upon government, so many refiners in politics, so many curious inquisitives, so many pretenders to business, and state employments, greater porers upon books, nor plodders after wealth," as are to be found in this "region of spleen." Though the "medley of humours" of these people, who are not only more unlike each other than those of any other nation, but also more unlike themselves at different times than is usual with men, might have a bad effect on the government, "it must needs have a good one upon our stage, and has given admirable play to our comical wits."²⁶ Intermingled with Temple's interest in the similarity of people, was his absorption in their differences, or "humours," and it was this which he carried over to his contemplation of English comedy. Far from suggesting that his native drama should conform to any external standard, such as that set up by the classical critic, he declared that it was the very nonconforming nature of the Englishman, which explained his peculiar genius.

Though Temple, who felt that the purpose of literature was to divert and solace men, and that it could not be circumscribed by rules, passed literary judgments which were hardly more than the personal preferences of "a man of taste," he was nevertheless led on, by his persistent wish to understand the complex of reasons behind the coming and going of cultures, at least to suggest the social and historical approach to literature so familiar to us today. It was no more than a suggestion. For this well-bred dilettante would not have been himself had he pursued further a difficult thought.

II.

THE beautiful literary creed of the sixteenth-century critic, enamored of the golden world delivered by the poets,²⁷ did not survive the Renaissance. For the political and religious unrest of the seventeenth century, the growing interest in science, the new ideas suggested by the explorers and merchants, who, as we have seen, were bringing home reports of other parts of the world very different from the familiar English setting—all of these influences combined to distract men's minds from the earlier critical ideas which might have developed into a con-

sistent literary creed. Rymer was probably quite right when he observed that the England of his time was as free of critics as of wolves, and that for critical theory one must look to France and Italy.²⁵ French thought, absorbed by the cavaliers and wits who gathered around Charles during his years of exile in France, was at the basis of nearly all that was now written of a critical nature in England. As Dryden attests, ". . . impartially speaking, the French are as much better critics than the English, as they are worse poets."²⁶

The underlying theory of these French critics as to the function of the poet was that the poet must demonstrate to the reader the inevitable laws of the moral world by rewarding virtue and punishing vice. Instead of moving men to a sense of ideal beauty, as the Renaissance poet must, his function was to show men the principles according to which their conduct should be regulated. Balzac, who exerted such a great influence on the growth of classical thought both in England and France, spoke of the philosophical acumen which a poet must have in order to explain the relation of good and evil, "*Le louange de bien escrire,*" he wrote in a *Lettre à Conrart* (1651),

n'est pas celle que je cherche principalement; il me semble qu'il y a quelque chose de plus haut où il faut viser dans les escrits . . . découvrir des veritez fines et secrets, debiter des originaux en traitant mesme de lieux communs, plaire et instruire tout à la fois, sçavoir distinguer entre le bien apparent et le veritable bien, entre le bien et le mieux, juger de tous les degrez et de toutes les différentes du bien; peser jusqu'au moindre grain du merite et de la valeur des choses: ce seroit en ce genre-là que vostre . . . serviteur voudroit reussir. . . .²⁷

The purpose of poetry is serious instruction; it is "agréable" only incidentally. Le Bossu, another upholder of the classical beliefs, said of the Epic, that ". . . l'Utile est une propriété essentielle à la Narrative Epique, et que l'Agréable n'en est qu'une qualité."²⁸ The poet and the philosopher both wish to instruct, and therefore the poet too, ". . . est obligé de savoir parfaitement la Morale, et d'être véritablement vertueux."²⁹ Dacier completely stated the conception of the poet-philosopher, by whose influence the small spark of reason discernible in the human mind is strengthened so that it is able to control the otherwise unruly passions, when he compared the poet and

the historian, in the Aristotelian manner. The historian is dismissed with fitting scorn, since he can seldom produce a cause to explain the event he describes. The poet, on the other hand, is absolute master of the matter, and has a reason for the smallest incident. He, therefore, is better able than the historian to instruct his reader because he can present him with an ordered universe. Dacier's remarks might have been equally well made by Chapelain, Rapin, or d'Aubignac. Literature, according to this didactic view, is to point out the moral regulations of the world, to be a public lesson in manners. Religion or philosophy might be nobler than literature, but less comprehensible to the ordinary person, who is given by the poet, ". . . une secrète instruction des choses les plus utiles au Peuple, et les plus difficiles à luy persuader."⁸³

Even that group of great French writers after the middle of the century, whose interest lay primarily in creative writing, shared this fundamental classical conception—that the end of poetry is to instruct. Instruction, said Racine, is ". . . le but que tout homme qui travaille pour le public doit se proposer."⁸⁴ Molière considered the theater of the ancients a school of virtue as much as those presided over by the philosophers. La Fontaine said of his fables, ominously, "Les fables ne sont pas ce qu'elles semblent être," "Le conte fait passer le précepte avec lui."⁸⁵ And Boileau gave the serious warning, "Auteurs, prêtez l'oreille à mes instructions,"

Qu'en savantes leçon votre muse fertile
Partout joigne au plaisant le solide et l'utile.
Un lecture sage fuit un vain amusement,
Et veut mettre à profit son divertissement.⁸⁶

Finally Fontenelle conceived of a future for poetry similar to that he dreamed of for science and philosophy. Perhaps a time will come, he thought, when poets will strive to be more philosophic than poetic, to have more "d'esprit que de talent."

Rymer was, of course, the exponent of this rationalistic creed in England. But whether he, and the men of his period, such as Cowley, Waller, Shadwell, Roscommon, and others who, by their chance remarks in prefaces, prologues, and essays, tend to the side of classicism in literature, are really products of the French school of thought, or outgrowths of English rationalism,

it is difficult to determine. For as Descartes in France was inclining the poet's mind toward reason, common sense, and underlying laws, so Hobbes in England was noticing the similarity between the poet's function and that of all serious thinkers. The poet's materials, too, are "nothing but experience and knowledge of Nature, and especially humane nature."³⁷ He who would undertake to write a heroic poem, ". . . must not only be the Poet, to place and connect, but also the Philosopher, to furnish and square his matter."³⁸ It was the rationalist's impulse "to square his matter" which moved Rymer to rearrange *Othello*, so that virtue should be rewarded, evil-doing punished, and the spectator sent home with a quiet mind, admiring the justice of Providence, rather than with a mind disturbed by the "Jingle-jangle" of Shakespeare's extravagancies. To Rymer, as to Hobbes, "Poetry is to follow Nature; Philosophy must be his guide." History "records things higlety piglety, right or wrong, as they happen," but the poet has a nobler function; he "is not without huge labour and preparation to expose the Monster, and after shew the Divine Vengeance executed upon him."³⁹ One finds remarks to this effect throughout the prefaces and essays of the period,⁴⁰ though no critic, with the possible exception of Rymer, presented a complete critical theory, such as that which developed in France during this century. Whether the current conception of the aim of poetry—that it should lay bare the underlying moral plan which in our actual experience we all too frequently fail to see—came to England from France, or whether it was the natural outgrowth of the scientific temper of the time, it is certain that the notion of the poet as "a good moral Philosopher" was the almost universal interpretation, both in France and England, of Aristotle's remark that poetry is more philosophical than history.

Such a clear and reasonable sense of the aim of art was behind the seventeenth-century faith in "rules." Since the poet's mind is that of a reasonable human being, not of a divinely inspired one, a too soaring fancy must be restrained by judgment, the resemblance to truth being the utmost limit of a poet's liberty. As Rymer gaily described the struggle between spontaneity and control in the poetic process, "Fancy leaps and frisks, and away she's gone, whilst reason rattles the chains and follows after."⁴¹ Davenant, too, objected to "inspiration, a dan-

gerous word," and declared his belief in "exact government and order, which are not the postures of chance, but proceed from Vigilance and labour."⁴² Howard,⁴³ Rochester,⁴⁴ Roscommon,⁴⁵ Mulgrave,⁴⁶ and many others in this age of "reasonable" thought echoed a belief in the "solidité" to which Saint-Évremond referred.

Dryden, who tells us that he "was sailing in a vast ocean, without other help than the pole-star of the Ancients, and the rules of the French stage among the Moderns,"⁴⁷ reminds us by his remark that the neoclassicism of France was as influential as the philosophic rationalism in the formation of this seventeenth-century attitude toward "reason" in art. Dryden concluded his "Preface to *Troilus and Cressida*" with a quotation from Rapin, expressing the basic thought of the neoclassical critical creed constructed by French logic and often repeated by the English.

If the rules be well considered, we shall find them to be made only to reduce Nature into method, to trace her step by step, and not to suffer the least mark of her to escape us: . . . They are founded upon good sense, and sound reason, rather than on authority; for though Aristotle and Horace are produced, yet no man must argue, that what they write is true, because they writ it; but 'tis evident, by the ridiculous mistakes and gross absurdities which have been made by those poets who have taken their fancy only for their guide, that if this fancy be not regulated, it is a mere caprice, and utterly incapable to produce a reasonable and judicious poem.⁴⁸

Dryden, in one of his moods at least, accepted in good faith the philosophy of literature worked out by the French. Imagination in a poet "is a faculty so wild and lawless, that like a high-ranging spaniel, it must have clogs tied to it, lest it outrun the judgment":⁴⁹ this remark is typical of many which are to be found scattered through Dryden's prefaces and dedications. Dacier, Le Bossu, d'Aubignac, all of whom Dryden read and pondered, reflected in no doubtful terms the point of view which Dryden so admired in Rapin,—that, though genius is born and not made, it alone is not sufficient, for the poet must be completely in possession of himself, he must follow the rules of the ancients, or "reason," if he is to arrive at perfection, and be saved from the extravagances which beset the undisciplined poet.

Even the great French writers, whom Dryden loved, did not seriously question the principle of the rules. Corneille left himself a loophole when he said, "Il est constant qu'il y a des préceptes, puisqu'il y a un art; mais il n'est pas constant quels ils sont."⁵⁰ But, nevertheless, "Le but du poète est de plaire selon les règles de son art."⁵¹ Boileau believed in conscious art, produced by a gifted mind, perfectly familiar with the rules of the ancients, which are only the synthesis of reason. And reason is the first essential in art,

Aimez donc la raison: que toujours vos écrits
Empruntent d'elle seule et leur lustre et leur prix.⁵²

Fontenelle went one step further than the more liberal-minded Boileau, when he maintained that the moderns, profiting by the false ideas of poetry proposed in former ages, had come upon "le vraie système." We are on the right path, "guidés par un grand nombre de règles et de réflexions qui ont été faites sur cet art."⁵³ Fontenelle mistrusted "le génie, le beau feu, l'ardeur sacrée, l'enthousiasm," which only lead to error, and believed it as possible to discover definite rules for art, as to disclose the laws of science, for "il y a toutes les apparences du monde que la raison se perfectionnera."⁵⁴ Fontenelle expresses in the most extreme terms the reliance of the seventeenth-century critic on reason. One has but to read his witty dialogues to realize the essential barrenness of this rationalistic aesthetic thought, which attempts to reduce "experience" to mathematical formula.

Nor, when it came to choosing between the good and the bad in art, were the more experimental critics willing thus to disregard their irrational taste. The words with which Glanvill describes the shift in the method of the scientist suggested by Bacon—that it "must not be the work of the Mind turned in upon itself, and only conversing with its own Ideas; but it must be raised from the Observations and Applications of Sense, and take its Accounts from Things as they are in the sensible world"⁵⁵—might apply equally well to the subtle change in criticism expressed by the casual remarks of the freer critics of literature, when they approached the question of judging art. For Bacon's arguments against the tyranny of authority, his impatience with the Idols, his encouragement of ex-

periment rather than groundless reasoning, influenced the seventeenth-century attitude toward critical theory as well as that toward science. Those who, like Temple, suspected that the standard of the ancients was not the final measure of art, who were more interested in the poem or play itself than in theories about it, and were inclined to rely on their own "taste" in the matter, rather than on authority—such critics were curiously allied in their thinking to the natural scientists. One can, however, do no more than suggest the connection, since critical theory lagged so far behind science, in this great age of mathematicians and philosophers, that it was scarcely aware of its connection with the "new science" at all. Most of the literary critics in France and England, indeed, followed logically the thought that the poet must be guided by certain definite rules in the business of pointing out the underlying scheme of the universe, with the inevitable conclusion that those who departed from such rules should automatically be judged bad poets. The famous quarrel of the *Cid*, in which Chapelain declared the decision of the Academy, that a work of art is not good unless it conform to the precepts drawn up by that assembly, bears witness to the fact that such judgments were actually pronounced.

But the feeling that the laws of the French Academy for judging literature were not entirely adequate is hinted at by even critics such as Rapin, who was looked upon in France and England as one of the most impressive defenders of the classical creed. "Yet is there in Poetry,"⁵⁶ he said in his translation of Aristotle, made English by Thomas Rymer, ". . . certain things that cannot be expressed, which are, (as it were) Mysteries." How is one to find a measure for the subtler effects of a poem? The scientist, feeling the inadequacy of the old assumptions, had recourse to increasingly delicate instruments. The critic could only attempt to notice with more astuteness the effect on himself—or rather on his "heart"—of a certain poem. What moves the heart, though there are no rules to justify the effect, is of immense value. "There are no precepts to teach the hidden graces, the insensible charms, and all that secret power of Poetry which passes to the heart,"⁵⁷ said Rapin.

The more analytical of the critics, catching the scientist's interest in the concrete, came to the skeptical conclusion that

laws cannot explain the beauty of a poem—the “‘I know not what’ in numbers which is understood by few, and notwithstanding gives great Delight in Poetry”⁵³—and that one must, finally, fall back on an inner sense of the matter, or “taste.” It is not necessary for poets to study strict reason, wrote Sir Robert Howard, in his Preface to “The Great Favourite,” “nor do I condemn in the least anything of what Nature soever that pleases. . . . I rather blame the unnecessary understanding of some that have labour’d to give strict rules to things that are not Mathematical . . . for in the difference of Tragedy and Comedy and of Fars it self, there can be no determination but by the Taste. . . .”⁵⁴ Mathematics, the very basis of science, cannot be called upon in the delicate question of aesthetic judgments, which, when all is said, can only be decided by reference to taste. As Dryden expressed it, “Criticism, as it was first instituted by Aristotle, was meant a standard of judging well; the chiefest part of which is, to observe those excellencies which should delight a reasonable reader.”⁵⁵ Such a standard of judgment is implicit in Boileau’s maxim, “Le secret est d’abord de plaire et de toucher.”⁵⁶ The reasonable, normal mind, capable of being moved by art, is the one to judge literature—the mind which Molière appealed to when he said,

. . . je me fierois assez à l’approbation du parterre, par la raison qu’entre ceux que le composent, il y en a plusieurs qui sont capable de juger d’une pièce selon les règles, et que les autres en jugent par la bonne façon d’en juger, qui est de se laisser prendre aux choses, et de n’avoir ni prévention aveugle, ni complaisance affectée, ni délicatesse ridicule.⁵⁷

It is the final sanction of taste, which no one can exactly define, that the author wishes to receive. One is to feel whether a work of art is good or bad, and that is all. According to La Bruyère, “Celui qui le sent et qui l’aime a le goût parfait; celui qui ne le sent pas, et qui aime en deçà ou au delà, a le goût défectueux.”⁵⁸ Taste is more essential than a knowledge of the rules. “. . . ceux qui s’attachent fort aux règles n’ont que bien peu de goût, et c’est pourtant le bon goût qui doit faire les bonnes règles pour tout ce qui regarde la bien-séance,” said Méré, and again: “. . . je ne juge de rien, je dis seulement ce que je sens, et

l'effet que chaque chose produit dans mon coeur et dans mon esprit."⁶⁴ For taste, though it cannot be defined, is as absolute as the external laws of the classicist.

Saint-Évremond, by his conversation, his letters, and his essays, helped to diffuse this subjective attitude toward literature. One rarely meets men of taste, and yet it is only they who can call themselves critics, he said. Les "gens doctes" "Pour ne rien sentir, pour rien penser délicatement, ils ne peuvent entrer dans la délicatesse du sentiment, ni dans la finesse de la pensée."⁶⁵ Temple's impatience with "the critics," who held up a standard of judgment unrelated to the thing judged, he shared with the group in France and England who agreed with Saint-Évremond that there had been ". . . depuis quelque années, un grand nombre de critiques et peu de bons juges,"⁶⁶ a group which expressed, not very forcibly but nevertheless distinctly, a strain of thought in revolt against old methods, and related, though not consciously, to the "new science."

But this way of taking literature, appealing as it was to Temple's *libertin* nature, was not altogether satisfactory to a statesman and historian, such as Temple aspired to be. His attempt to find a broader basis for literary judgments than the purely personal one of taste, is related to the idea, current since the time of Jean Bodin, that the customs, institutions and arts of nations vary according to climatic and geographical conditions. Bacon, perhaps under the influence of Bodin's thought, suggested that "an account be given of the characters of the several regions and peoples; their natural dispositions, whether apt and suited for the study of learning," in short, that the cultures of various periods and countries be examined and written down, in order that "the Literary Spirit of each age may be charmed as it were from the dead."⁶⁷ But no critic, before Temple, developed the suggestion of Bacon—whom Temple looked upon as a "great wit" among the moderns—as to the interdependence of art and national cultures.

The historical approach to literature, however, was certainly latent in Renaissance criticism, for it soon became evident that English literature itself was not going to come out very well when measured by Aristotle's rules. Stanyhurst in his "Dedication and Preface to the Translation of the Aeneid" (1582), attacked "these grammatical Precisians," which would make

English poetry conform to classical rule. As "every countrey hath his peculiar law," so every language should be permitted "too use his particular loare."⁶⁸ Harington, in "A Briefe Apologie," wrote against those who reduce

. . . all heroicall Poems unto the methode of Homer and certain precepts of Aristotle, for Homer I say that that which was commendable in him to write in that age, the times being changed, would be thought otherwise now.⁶⁹

Daniel expressed the idea that taste changes with changing civilization more fully and poetically than any of the Elizabethan critics: ". . . all our understandings are not to be built by the square of Greece and Italie,"⁷⁰ and literature

. . . hath as many shapes as there be tongues or nations in the world, nor can with all the tyrannicall Rules of idle Rhetorique be governed otherwise than custome and present observation will allow.⁷¹

One cannot be dogmatic in these matters of literary judgments,

. . . for indeed there is no right in these things that are continually in a wandring motion, carried with the violence of uncertaine likings, being but onely the time that gives them their power.⁷²

One finds many similar remarks among the critics of the seventeenth century, which indicate an awareness of the fact that, in appraising the English genius the standards of Greece and Rome, as interpreted by the French, are not adequate. But these comments are all of a casual nature, and are never related to anything like a critical theory. Bolton, in *Hypercritica* (1618), spoke of the need of English history in order to understand the essential character of the English. Rymer, in his "Preface to Rapin," resented the popular comment that the English are by nature fierce, and called them "the best natur'd Nation under the Sun," quite capable of writing tragedies of a not bloody variety. The Italians are best fitted for burlesque, he thought; the French are lacking in "sinews"; the Germans are still "rude and unpolisht," not up "to that smoothness and humanity which the English may boast of."⁷³ Dryden shared this national pride, when he said "I cannot think so contemptibly of the age I live in, or so dishonourably of my own country"⁷⁴ as not to consider the present-day Englishman a match for the an-

cients in most kinds of poetry, and superior in some. And "for my part, I desire to be tried by the laws of my own country."⁷⁵ Sprat had much to say of the English genius, which was "not so airy and discursive as that of some of our Neighbors,"⁷⁶ but given to reasoning rather. And Roscommon, in "An Essay on Translated Verse" (1684), asked,

But who did ever in French authors see
The comprehensive English Energy?⁷⁷

Though such remarks show a strong national pride, and suggest that with this pride came the thought that English literature cannot be judged by the French neoclassical standards, they cannot be said to express any very elaborate theory of literary judgments.

Temple's archenemy, Perrault, went a step further in this early attempt to establish the relativity of aesthetic judgments, when he distinguished between "universal" and "relative" beauties. There are, he said,

*Des beautez universelles et absoluës, c'est à dire qui plaisent en tous temps, en tous lieux et à toutes sortes de personnes: d'autres particulières et relatives qui ne plaisent qu'à certaines personnes qu'en certains lieux et qu'en certains temps.*⁷⁸

The tastes of Greece and Rome and Asia differ, he said, and "Les autres Nations ont eu leur goust particulier." Moreover,

*. . . ce qui se dit des différentes Nations se doit entendre aussi des humeurs, et des professions différentes qui se rencontrent dans chaque nation, comme aussi des différents siècles et des différents temps.*⁷⁹

It was thoughts such as these, on the permanent and the universal in human nature and the relative in tastes and customs, which led Temple into his prolonged meditations on the cycles of civilizations; it was these same thoughts which made him appreciate the unique quality of English comedies, and seek to explain it by reference to the climate and the institutions of England. Saint-Évremond pondered the relation of the permanent and the passing, in terms very suggestive of Temple himself:

Je sais qu'il y a de certaines règles éternelles, pour être fondées sur un bon sens, sur une raison ferme et solide, qui subsistera toujours;

mais il en est peu qui portent le caractère de cette raison incorruptible. Celles qui regardaient les moeurs, les affaires, les coutumes des vieux Grecs, ne nous touchent guère aujourd'hui.⁸⁰

Habits and customs have their time; some grow old and die, others are forgotten with the empire as it passes.

Il n'y en a donc que bien peu qui aient droit de diriger nos esprits dans tous les temps; et il serait ridicule de vouloir toujours régler des ouvrages nouveaux par des lois éteintes. La poésie aurait tort d'exiger de nous ce que la religion et la justice n'en obtiennent pas.⁸¹

The application of this general theory of the coming and going of national genius to English comedy, which Temple made so effectively, might, indeed, have been suggested by Saint-Évremond's essay, "De la comedie anglaise." For this observant critic said: ". . . c'est la représentation de la vie ordinaire, selon la diversité des humeurs et les différents caractères des hommes." Perhaps the fact that to Saint-Évremond it seemed that ". . . ces fourberies, ces simplicités, cette politique et le reste de ces caractères ingénieusement formés se poussent trop loin à notre avis,"⁸² moved Temple to consider the question more closely.

Saint-Évremond was not the first to remark on the varieties of the English "humours." Barclay, among others, comments on them in *The Mirrour of Mindes*: "The greatness of Brittainé," he thought ["is to be] esteemed by the several and unlike manners of the inhabitants, . . . as if in the Ocean, Brittainé alone were another world, all kinds of dispositions are to be found in her inhabitants."⁸³ To Sprat it seemed that "even the Position of our Climate, the Air, the Influence of the Heavens, the Composition of our English Blood, as well as the Embraces of the Ocean" made England a "land of Experimental Knowledge."⁸⁴ Nor was Saint-Évremond the first to comment on the unique quality of English comedy. Dryden, in his "Essay of Dramatic Poesy," considered the word *humeur* in the French language, deciding, as Temple did after him,

among the English 'tis otherwise: where by humour is meant some extravagant habit, passion, or affection, particular . . . to some one person, by the oddness of which, he is immediately distinguished from the rest of men. . . .⁸⁵

But Temple was the first to explain the English temperament behind these comedies, by reference to climate and social conditions. His analysis of the "humours" of the English was so quickly made use of by Swift,⁸⁶ by Congreve,⁸⁷ by Farquhar,⁸⁸ and by Steele,⁸⁹ so often repeated and enlarged upon by eighteenth-century writers,⁹⁰ that the fact that Temple was the first to express in anything like complete form this popular idea of the eighteenth century is often overlooked—as, indeed, it should be. For the only important thing to observe is that Temple, in his effort to relate his thoughts on English comedy to his larger sense of the meaning of civilizations, marks a transition from the absolute manner of judging literature to a more tentative, historical approach.

One is tempted to associate Temple, a *libertin* in thought, with the eighteenth-century philosophers, since, in his insistence on the emotional rather than the didactic function of literature, in his scorn of the old, external rules of poetry, and in his way of looking upon art as relative to certain periods and nations, he was not in sympathy with the prevailing critical beliefs of France and England, at which he glanced with mild aloofness. His approach to these critical questions, like his approach to an understanding of the past, was that of the amateur "philosopher," skeptical of abstract theories, ready to reconsider accepted ideas in the light of a certain libertine attitude toward life, which grew out of the reading and conversation of this experienced man of the world. Temple, suspicious of the assumption that his contemporaries indeed represented the highest reach of civilization, inquired into accounts of other peoples, and pleased himself, at least, with his conclusions as to the similarities and differences of men; suspicious, too, of the current literary talk, he reconsidered the aesthetic questions which seemed to him important in the light of what he felt about men's "moral" nature, and of what he had learned of the history of other countries, and other times.

To summon Temple from his seventeenth-century retreat merely to defend the "ancients," and uphold an outworn critical creed, is to deal very rudely with this retired ambassador, who, enjoying the society of a "few people of sense," belonged to no school, and subscribed to no creed. One must address with more deference a "private spirit" of this philosophic century,

who, from the seclusion of his garden and his library, considered, according to his own temperamental bias. the ideas on the nature of man, the meaning of the past, and the place of art in life, which came to him more or less clearly from the polite world of London and Paris, on which he had forever turned his well-formed back.

APPENDIX

COMPOSITION AND PUBLICATION OF TEMPLE'S *MISCELLANEA*

IN 1670, after his recall from The Hague where he had been sent as Ambassador in 1668, Temple retired to Sheen, near Richmond, where he occupied himself with his reading and his writing until 1674, when he was again appointed Ambassador to The Hague. In this interval of his "leisure and retreat he writ his *Observations upon the United Provinces*,¹ and one part of his *Miscellanies*." So Lady Giffard, his sister, reports in her *Life and Character of Sir William Temple*.²

But the six essays which made up Temple's first volume of essays, the *Miscellanea* (1680), were not originally conceived with any such publication in mind. Before his retirement, he had written his "Essay upon the Present State and Settlement of Ireland," and in 1668 submitted it in manuscript to Lord Arlington, then Secretary of State, with the following remark:

Before I go, I take the liberty to trouble you with a succession of my follies, since you have so long been contented to bear them, and send you that discourse upon the Irish business which I spoke of before you left town, but could never see you at leisure enough for such an amusement; and therefore I adventured to show it to my Lord Keeper first, at my going to Tunbridge, who professed to be pleased with many hints it gave him.³

This essay was not published until, in 1701, it appeared in the *Select Letters*. Temple's "Survey of the Constitutions and Interests of the Empire, Sweden, Denmark, Spain, Holland, France, and Flanders, with their Relation to England in the year 1671" was written also for the consideration of the Secretary of State, and this essay, in 1680, was included in the *Miscellanea*. Temple visited his friends in Ireland during the summer of 1673, and addressed a letter to the Earl of Essex, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, "on the advancement of trade of Ireland." This letter, together with that written to the Duke of Ormond, in October, 1673, "Upon his Grace's desiring me to give him my Opinion what was to be done in that Conjunction," was also included in the *Miscellanea*. In 1674, just before he left again for The Hague, Temple wrote his letter "To the Countess of Essex, upon her Grief Occasioned by the Loss of her Only Daughter." In the June of 1677, while he was at the Congress of Nimeguen, he wrote to Mon-

sieur de Zulichen "An Essay upon the Cure of the Gout by Moxa." Later in the same year he was called to England by the death of his father, and here he stayed in retirement, perfecting these six essays until, in 1679, he was again drawn into political affairs.

The curious circumstances which induced Temple to collect into one volume this assortment of material he himself reports in his *Memoirs*:

During this session of Parliament [1680] I had several notices given me of a practice set on foot in the House of Commons, for impeaching me, as one that had been an instrument in making the general peace; and this was urged by stories of being a man of arbitrary principles, and one that had written several things, though without name, against the constitution of Parliament, and in favour of Popery: and this went so far, that Mr. Montague went a great way from man to man in the house, to know whether if such an accusation were brought in, they would be against me. Several went into it, upon hatred to the late Treasurer, whose friend they took me to be, and upon envy at my being designed for Secretary of State; but yet in no such numbers that Mr. Montague could hope to make anything of it: and when some of my friends acquainted me with it, I only desired them to obtain leave of the house, that I might hear my accusation at the bar of the house, and assured them that I should be glad to have that occasion of telling there both Mr. Montague's story and my own. This fell; but upon the knowledge of these practices, my Lord Sunderland and Mr. Sidney, who thought that a man who had such part in the King's affairs, ought to stand as well as he could with the house of Commons, pressed me to suffer several small things I had formerly written, and of which copies had run, to be printed as they were, under the title of *Miscellanea*. They thought, by that publication, men would see I was not a man of the dangerous principles pretended; and I might assure the world of being the author of no books that had not my name. The thing seemed to pass well enough; only Lord Hallifax commending them to me in general, told me as a friend, that I should take heed of carrying too far that principle of paternal dominion (which was in the Essay of government) for fear of destroying the rights of the people. So tender was everybody of those points at that time.⁴

The following irritated "Letter to the Stationer," prefixed to the first edition of the *Miscellanea*, throws light on the same situation, and incidentally tells us how the collection acquired its name. Temple complains that several of the essays had come into print, though he had expressed a wish that they should not be published until after his death. But now

I am content you should publish them, rather than any other should do it without my leave, and rather than any further mystery should be made of those that are abroad, which has given the occasion of two other Books

being laid to my charge, that I have been so far from writing, as never to have seen.

For the Order and Titles of the several Papers, they must, I doubt, be the same with the Copies already dispersed, since these cannot be recalled. For any general Title, I leave it wholly to you, as well as the time; nor are you to expect from me either any Correction of press, or trouble of Preface; being resolved, since they first run away without my consent, to own them no longer, and to concern myself in them no more than if they had never been mine. What advantages soever you can propose to yourself by them I can expect but one (and that will agree very ill with yours) which is, That the publishing of them may possibly suppress them; and that they may be talkt of no more when once they grow common, since nothing but the scarcity of them can give them any vogue; If this happens, I shall be at quiet, which is all I ask of them or you ⁵

The *Miscellanea*, then, appeared in 1680.⁶ A second edition, "corrected and augmented by the author," appeared in 1681 and in 1691.

By 1680 it had become evident that the Privy Council was about to collapse. Temple retired to Sheen, and in the following year his name was struck from the list of Privy Councilors. This marked the end of Temple's political career, though he was urged by William in 1688 to act as Secretary of State, and upon several occasions consulted by him at More Park.

In 1690 Temple published the four essays which make up the Second Part of the *Miscellanea*, namely: "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning"; "Upon the Gardens of Epicurus"; "Of Heroic Virtue"; "Of Poetry." Of these four essays only the second, "Upon the Gardens of Epicurus," is given a date—1685—by Temple himself. One can assume, however, with some assurance that "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning" was not written before the year 1689, since in that year a complete edition of Thomas Burnet's *Sacred Theory of the Earth* was published for the first time in English, though it had appeared in Latin in 1686. But Temple refers to the English edition when he mentions the

Two Pieces that have lately pleased me . . . one in English upon the Antediluvian World; and another in French upon the Plurality of Worlds; one write by a Divine, and the other by a Gentleman. . . .⁷

The date of the essay "Of Poetry" is less certain. One has some right to believe, however, that it was written shortly after "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning," since Temple pauses in the midst of that essay to observe, "But the consideration of poetry ought to be a subject by itself,"⁸ which suggests that he worked out in more detail the ideas on poetry implied in "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning" soon after he had laid aside that piece of work.

That the essay "Of Heroic Virtue" was written before either of the two essays discussed above is at least suggested by the fact that Temple looks forward to a future essay when he says, in "Of Heroic Virtue," "I will leave poetry to an essay by itself."⁹ And in "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning," he seems to be turning over in his mind material on which he had previously been working, when he remarks:

For how long nations, without the changes introduced by conquest, may continue in the same customs, institutions, and opinions, will be easily observed in the stories of the *Peruvians* and *Mexicans*, of the *Chinese* and the *Scythians*,¹⁰

mentioning the most important civilizations which he considered at length in his study "Of Heroic Virtue." Again, in the essay "Of Poetry," Temple harks back, at least verbally, to a previous piece of work, when he says that the happy mixture of "profit and pleasure . . . has given occasion for esteeming or at least for calling heroick vertue and poetry divine."¹¹ It is possible, of course, that Temple wrote "Of Heroic Virtue" after he had finished "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning" and "Of Poetry," adding these remarks later, when arranging the essays for printing. But it is hardly probable that he could have written these three essays, all of them long, in the year 1689. Moreover, the essay "Of Heroic Virtue," which is the simplest of the three in method and the least critical in tone, seems to suggest that it was written before the other two, both of which are more interpretative in thought. The essay "Of Heroic Virtue," perhaps, marks a stage in the process of Temple's thinking. That Temple should have placed "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning" first in the second volume of the *Miscellanea* was natural, since that essay offered a comment on a question just then under discussion in literary groups.

Though we have no final proof that "Of Heroic Virtue" was written before "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning," and "Of Poetry," we can at least fix the date before which it probably was not written. In his essay "Of Heroic Virtue," Temple refers to the *Works of Confutius*,

. . . which have lately in France been printed in the Latin tongue, with a learned preface, by some of the missionary Jesuits, under the title of the Works of Confutius.¹²

In 1686 a group of French Jesuits did publish the teachings of Confucius in Latin, with the title, *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* (Paris, 1686), and this is probably the work to which Temple refers. In the same essay Temple mentions "the well-digested histories or relations"

which have made the "perpetual wars" of the Saracen Empire "most vulgarly known."¹³ In 1687 appeared Knolles's *Historie of the Turkes*, from which Temple derived not only detailed information as to Turkish history, but also an analysis of Turkish policy, which he incorporates into his essay, point by point.¹⁴ Though Temple does not refer to Knolles directly, it seems probable that this is the authority on whom he depends for his information on the Turks.

It would seem, then, that Temple wrote the four essays which make up Part Two of the *Miscellanea* between the years 1685 and 1690: "Upon the Gardens of Epicurus" in 1685; "Of Heroic Virtue," not earlier than 1686 or 1687; "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning" and "Of Poetry" in 1689. This second and most important volume of the *Miscellanea* appeared first in 1690, and was reissued in 1691, and again in 1692, "corrected and augmented by the author." Temple sent a copy of this 1692 edition to the Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where it is still to be found. Part One and Part Two of the *Miscellanea* were united into one volume in 1693, and were republished in that form in 1697, and again in 1705. The two parts were translated into French and published in Utrecht in 1693.

In 1698 Swift came to More Park as Temple's secretary. As he grew in Temple's confidence he became closely connected with his work, so that when Temple died in 1699 he left Swift £100, and also the profit to be derived from the publication of a collected edition of his writing. In 1701 Swift published Part Three of the *Miscellanea*, with the following explanation of its contents:

The Two following Essays, *Of Popular Discontents*, and *Of Health and Long Life*, were written many Years before the Author's Death. They were Revised and Corrected by himself; and were designed to have been part of a Third *Miscellanea*, to which some others were to have been added, if the later part of his Life had been attended with any sufficient Degree of Health.

For the Third Paper, relating to the Controversie about Ancient and Modern Learning I cannot well Inform the Reader upon what Occasion it was writ, having been at that time in another Kingdom; but it appears never to have been finished by the Author.¹⁵

The two next Papers contain the Heads of Two Essays intended to have been written upon the *Different Conditions of Life and Fortune*; and upon *Conversation*. I have directed they should both be Printed among the rest, because I believe there are few who will not be content to see even the First Draught of anything from this Author's Hand.

At the End I have added a few Translations from Virgil, Horace and Tibullus, or rather Imitations, done by the Author above Thirty Years ago; whereof the First was Printed among other Eclogues of Virgil in the Year 1679 but without any Mention of the Author. They were indeed not intended to have been made publick till I was informed of several Copies

that were got abroad, and those very imperfect and corrupt. Therefore the Reader finds them here only to prevent him from finding them in other Places, very faulty, and perhaps accompanied with many spurious Additions.¹⁶

Swift published three volumes of Temple's letters in 1700-3: the *Introduction to the History of England* (previously published in 1695 and 1699) in 1708; the *Miscellanea*, in three parts, between 1705 and 1708, and the *Memoirs* in two volumes in 1709.¹⁷ Lady Giffard bitterly resented Swift's manner of handling his trust, and attacked him especially for publishing the Third Part of her brother's *Memoirs*, which she alleged was taken from an "unfaithful copy." Swift's reply to Lady Giffard's accusation is interesting to us because of the picture one gets of the secretary working with Temple in his study, reading, correcting, and perhaps discussing the manuscripts.

By particular commands, one thing is understood: and by general ones, another. And I might insist upon it that I had particular commands for everything I did, though more particular for some than others. Your Ladyship says, if ever they were designed to be printed, it must have been from the original. Nothing of his, ever printed in my time, was from the original. The first *Memoirs* was from my copy; so were the second *Miscellanea*; so was the introduction to the *English History*; so was every volume of *Letters*. They were all copied from the originals by Sir William Temple's direction, and corrected all along by his orders; and it was the same with these last *Memoirs*; so that whatever he printed, since I had the honour to know him, was an unfaithful copy of it, were it to be tried by the original. . . . Your nephews say the printed copy [of the *Memoirs*, Part Three] differs from the original in forty places as to words and manners of expression. I believe it may in a hundred. . . . These *Memoirs* were printed by a correct copy, exactly after the same manner as the author's other works were. He told me a dozen times upon asking him, that it was his intention they should be printed after his death, but never fixed anything about the time. The corrections were all his own, ordering me to correct in my copy as I read it, as he always did.¹⁸

The first collected edition of Temple's *Works* came out in 1720. Prefixed to the first volume was a "Life of Sir William Temple," probably compiled by an unknown hack writer, which is based entirely on Abel Boyer's *Memoirs of the Life and Negotiations of Sir William Temple* (London, 1714). The edition was re-issued in 1723, and again in 1731, this time with a preliminary notice by Lady Giffard, *The Life and Character of Sir William Temple*, "by a Particular Friend," which has been regularly reprinted until the last collected edition of 1814, in which a *Life and Character of the Author, Considerably Enlarged*, was substituted.

Between 1731 and 1814 there were five editions of Temple's col-

lected *Works*: in 1740, 1750, 1754, 1757, and 1770. In 1754 the *Works* were printed in four volumes instead of two, and that is the form in which they have appeared since that time.

Temple's *Works* have not been reprinted since 1814, though certain essays have appeared in collections of essays: in *British Prose Writers* (London, 1819); in an anthology of garden essays, edited by A. F. Sieveking, *The Praise of Gardens* (London, 1899); in J. E. Spingarn's *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 1908); and in L. Cornaro's collection of essays, *The Art of Living Long* (Milwaukee, 1917). In 1911 appeared *Essays of Sir William Temple*, Selected, with an Introduction by J. A. Nickliß.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

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A. V. Robbins, *Sir William Temple's Cabinet, Its History and Why It Failed* (Chicago, 1902).
3. For comments on Temple as a writer see
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 7. "Memoirs," *Works*, I, 471.
 8. "Upon the Gardens of Epicurus," *Works*, II, 223.
 9. Henry Carey, *I raggvagli di Parnasso; or Advertisements from Parnassus; in Two Centuries* (London, 1669), Advertisement LXIII, p. 122.
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 11. John Evelyn, *Diary* (London, 1879), III, 45.
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 13. "Heads Designed for an Essay upon the Different Conditions of Life and Fortune," *Works*, II, 468.

14. Temple's Will In *The Praise of Gardens* (London, 1899). Appendix to Introduction, p. lxiv.
15. For a discussion of the dates of these essays see Appendix, p. 99.
16. *Works*, II, 391.
17. *Preface*, I, lxxxviii.
18. *Ibid.*, p. civ.
19. Spingarn, "Introduction," *Temple's Essays* (Oxford, 1909), p. v.
20. P. 60.
21. P. 112.

CHAPTER I

1. "Memoirs," *Works*, I, 162.
2. For a history of the manuscripts of Lady Giffard's *Life and Character* of Sir William Temple see the Introduction to G. C. Moore Smith's edition of *The Early Essays and Romances of Sir William Temple, Bt.* (Oxford, 1930).
3. Smith, p. 27. The italics indicate expurgated phrases.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
7. *Letters Written by the Late Jonathan Swift, D D*, collected and revised by Deane Swift, Esq., of Goodrich in Herefordshire (London, 1768), III, 129.
8. Smith, p. 28.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
10. "Heads Designed for an Essay on Conversation," *Works*, II, 476.
11. "Memoirs," *Works*, I, 472.
12. "Upon the Gardens of Epicurus," *Works*, II, 187.
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16. "Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning," *Works*, II, 164-165.
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24. "Heads Designed for an Essay upon the Different Conditions of Life and Fortune," *Works*, II, 467.

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30. "Upon the Gardens of Epicurus," *Works*, II, 188.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 216-217.
32. "Heads Designed for an Essay upon the Different Conditions of Life and Fortune," *Works*, II, 473.
33. "Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands," *Works*, I, 98.
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35. "Upon the Gardens of Epicurus," *Works*, II, 188.
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37. *Ibid.*, p. 189.
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 189-190.
39. "Upon the Original and Nature of Government," *Works*, II, 35.
40. "Heads Designed for an Essay on Conversation," *Works*, II, 466.
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42. *Ibid.*, p. 102.
43. *Works*, II, 469.
44. *Ibid.*
45. "Heads Designed for an Essay upon the Different Conditions of Life and Fortune," *Works*, II, 466.
46. "Upon the Gardens of Epicurus," *Works*, II, 182.
47. "Of Popular Discontents," *Works*, II, 359.
48. "Upon the Ancient and Modern Learning," *Works*, II, 157.
49. *Ibid.*
50. "Heads Designed for an Essay on Conversation," *Works*, II, 478.
51. "Heads Designed for an Essay upon the Different Conditions of Life and Fortune," *Works*, II, 466.
52. "Of Health and Long Life," *Works*, II, 427.
53. "Of Poetry," *Works*, II, 318.
54. "Of Health and Long Life," *Works*, II, 395.
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56. *Ibid.*
57. *Ibid.*, p. 394.
58. "Observations upon . . . the Netherlands," *Works*, I, xxxvi.
59. "Letter to the Countess of Essex," *Works*, II, 100-101.
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61. *Epicurus' Morals*, p. 1.
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CHAPTER II

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6. *Ibid.*, p. 158.
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8. "The Original and Nature of Government," *Works*, II, 29.
9. *Ibid.*
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11. "Some Thoughts upon Reviewing the Essay of Ancient and Modern Learning," *Works*, II, 457.
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106. "Of Heroic Virtue," *Works*, II, 256
107. *Histoire de l'Expedition* (Paris, 1616), pp. 172-173.
108. *Purchas his Pilgrimage*, V, 12, chap. vii, p. 411.
109. *Ibid.*, p. 423.
110. In *Relations de divers Voyages de Thévenot* (Paris, 1696), II, 20.
111. *Ibid.*
112. "Of Heroic Virtue," *Works*, II, 245
113. Quoted by Gustave Lanson, "L'origine et le développement de l'esprit philosophique," *Revue des Cours et Conférences*, XVII² (1908-9), 71.
114. *Ibid.*, p. 70.
115. Fénelon, "Dialogues des Morts," *Oeuvres* (Paris, 1865), II, 553
- Oeuvres de Malebranche* (Paris, 1871), II, 318
- See also:
- Juan Gonzalez de Mendoza, *The History of the Great and Mighty Kingdom of China, and the Situation Thereof* (1588)
- Benedict Goes, *The Journey of Benedict Goes from Azra to Cathay* (1602).
- Samuel Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrimage* (1614, 1617, 1626)
(Eight accounts of China are found in this anthology.)
- Nicolas Tripault, *Regni Chinen Sis Descriptio* (1639)
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- Gabriel Magaillan, *New History of China* (1680)

- Dominic Fernandez Navarette, *An Account of the Empire of China, Historical, Political, Moral and Religious* (1675).
116. See Temple, "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning," *Works*, II, 168.
117. "Of Heroic Virtue," *Works*, II, 255.
118. *Ibid.*, p. 239.
119. Compare Temple's remarks in his essay "Of Heroic Virtue," *Works*, II, 239-240, with those of Kircherus reprinted in the Appendix, p. 29, to Nieuhoff's study of China: "It is not only evident by the diligent search of the Fathers of our Society, that China is the greatest part of Cathay, but also it is most apparently proved out of Marcus Paulus Venetus; for he saith, that the most vast City Cambalu, or as the true pronunciation of the Tartars hath it, Cambalek, was the Regal Seat of the Great Cham; the Fathers of our Society say, that it is no other than the modern Imperial City of China, which they call Pequín, or Pekin, and that the vastness of the Walls made in a quadrangular order, and the incredible bigness of the City do more than sufficiently demonstrate the same."
120. "Of Heroic Virtue," *Works*, II, 249.
121. *Ibid.*, pp. 250-252.
122. Nieuhoff, pp. 218-219.
123. "Of Heroic Virtue," *Works*, II, 245-246.
124. *Ibid.*, p. 258.
125. *Ibid.*, p. 264.
126. *Oeuvres de Fontenelle*, III, 286.
127. Garcilasso de la Vega, *First Part of the Royal Commentaries of the Yncas*, Hakluyt Society, XLI, 62-63.
128. P. 150.
129. P. 144.
130. "Of Heroic Virtue," *Works*, II, 260-261.
131. *First Part of the Royal Commentaries of the Yncas*, p. 64.
132. *Ibid.* Cf. Temple, "Of Heroic Virtue," *Works*, II, 265.
133. *First Part of the Royal Commentaries of the Yncas*, p. 81.
134. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
135. "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning," *Works*, II, 143.
136. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
137. "Of Heroic Virtue," *Works*, II, 279.
138. *Ibid.*
139. F. E. Farley, *Scandinavian Influences in the English Romantic Movement*, "Harvard Studies and Notes" (Boston, 1903), IX, 64.
140. Pp. 235, 237-245.
141. P. 438. Cf. Temple, "Of Heroic Virtue," *Works*, II, 274.
142. Pp. 435-436.
143. "Of Heroic Virtue," *Works*, II, 290.
144. See also Mezerai, *Histoire des Turcs* (1650-65); Edward Pococke, *Specimen historiae Arabum* (1650); *The Travels of Pietro della Valle* (1664); Gabriel de Chinon, *Relations Nouvelles du Levant* (1671); John Fryer, *A New Account of East India and Persia* (1672-81); Daulier

Deslandes, *Les Beautés de la Perse, ou la description de ce qu'il y a de plus curieux dans ce Royaume* (1673); *The History of the Grand Visiers, Englished by J. E.* (1677); Dellon, *Relation d'un voyage aux Indes orientales* (1685), *The Travels of Monsieur de Thevenot into the Levant* (tr. 1686).

145. Richard Knolles, "The Author's Induction to the Christian Reader unto the Historie Following," *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (London, 1621).

146 "Of Heroic Virtue," *Works*, II, 302

147. "To the Reader," *The History of the Turkish Empire*.

148 "Of Heroic Virtue," *Works*, II, 298-300.

149. *The History of the Turkish Empire*, pp 78-82

150. "The Author's Induction to the Christian Reader unto the Historie Following "

151. P. 253

152 P 39

153. To the Reader, "The Present State of the Ottoman Empire," in Richard Knolles, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1687), Vol II.

154. "Of Heroic Virtue," *Works*, II, 292

155. *Ibid.*, p. 293.

156. Knolles, "The Author's Induction to the Christian Reader unto the Historie Following," *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*.

157. "Some Thoughts upon Reviewing the Essay of Ancient and Modern Learning," *Works*, II, 460.

CHAPTER III

1. "Some Thoughts upon Reviewing the Essay of Ancient and Modern Learning," *Works*, II, 449.

2. "Of Poetry," *Works*, II, 333.

3. *Ibid.*

4. "Some Thoughts upon Reviewing the Essay of Ancient and Modern Learning," *Works*, II, 456.

5. "Heads Designed for an Essay on Conversation," *Works*, II, 472.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 326.

7. "Upon the Garden of Epicurus," *Works*, II, 214-217.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 323.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 327.

10. "Heads Designed for an Essay on Conversation," *Works*, II, 475.

11. "Of Poetry," *Works*, II, 324.

12. "Heads Designed for an Essay upon the Different Conditions of Life and Fortune," *Works*, II, 465.

13. "Of Poetry," *Works*, II, 323-324.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 324.

15. "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning," *Works*, II, 181.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 175.

17. *Oeuvres de Saint-Évremond*, I, 134.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 139-140.

19. "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning," *Works*, II, 175.
20. *Ibid.*
21. See "Of Heroic Virtue," *Works*, II, 280-282; also "Of Poetry," *Works*, II, 336-337.
22. Preface.
23. *Ibid.*
24. "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning" *Works*, II, 346
25. "Of Poetry," *Works*, II, 347.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 348-350.
27. Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, Smith, I, 156.
28. Thomas Rymer, *Preface to Rapin*, Spingarn, II, 163-164.
29. *Dedication to the Aeneis*, Ker, II, 178.
30. Vial et Denise, pp. 82-83.
31. *Traité du poème épique* (Paris, 1693), p. 206.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 270.
33. Abbé d'Aubignac, *La Pratique du Theatre* (Paris, 1669) p. 4.
34. "Preface de Phèdre," *Oeuvres* (Paris, 1865), III, 303.
35. "Le Pâtre et le Lion," *Oeuvres de La Fontaine* (Paris, 1884), II, 1.
36. "L'Art Poétique," *Oeuvres*, p. 197.
37. *Answer to Davenant's Preface to Gondibert*, Spingarn, II, 62.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
39. *A Short View of Tragedy* (1693), Spingarn, II, 253-254.
40. See Richard Flecknoe, *A Short Discourse of the English Stage*, Spingarn, II, 93.
- Thomas Shadwell, *Preface to The Humorists* (1671), Spingarn, II, 153
- Earl of Roscommon, *An Essay on Translated Verse* (1684), Spingarn, II, 307-308
- Sir Richard Blackmore, *Preface to Prince Arthur* (1695), Spingarn, III, 227.
41. *The Tragedies of the Last Age*, Spingarn, II, 185.
42. *Preface to Gondibert*, Spingarn, II, 25.
43. *Preface to Four New Plays*, Spingarn, II, 102.
44. *An Allusion to Horace*, Spingarn, II, 285.
45. *An Essay on Translated Verse*, Spingarn, II, 297.
46. *An Essay upon Poetry*, Spingarn, II, 296.
47. *A Discourse Concerning the Original and Nature of Satire*, Ker, II, 17.
48. Ker, *op. cit.*, I, 228-229.
49. *Epistle Dedicatory of the Rival Ladies*, Ker, I, 8.
50. "Discours du Poems Dramatique," *Oeuvres* (Paris, 1862), I, 14.
51. "Discours de la Tragedie," *Oeuvres*, I, 95.
52. "L'Art Poétique," *Oeuvres*, p. 175.
53. "Digressions sur les anciens et les modernes," *Oeuvres*, IV, 192.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 197.
55. *Plus Ultra*, p. 52.
56. *Monsieur Rapin's Reflections on Aristotle's Treatise of Poesie* (made English by Mr. Rymer, 1674), p. 57.

57. *Ibid.*
58. *Ibid.*
59. Spingarn, *op. cit.*, II, 106.
60. *The Author's Apology for Heroic Poetry and Poetic Licence* (1677), Ker, I, 179.
61. "L'Art Poétique," *Oeuvres*, p. 185.
62. "La Critique de l'École des Femmes," *Oeuvres de Molière* (Paris, 1876), III, 335.
63. "Les Ouvrages de l'esprit," *Oeuvres* (Paris, 1765-82), I, 116.
64. *Les Oeuvres de la Chevalier de Méré*, II, 75-76.
65. *Oeuvres de Saint-Évremond*, I, 149.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 148
67. "De Augmentis Scientiarum," *Works*, IV, 301.
68. Smith, *op. cit.*, I, 144.
69. *Ibid.*, II, 215.
70. *A Defence of Rime*, Smith, II, 366.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 363.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 383.
73. Spingarn, *op. cit.*, II, 166.
74. *Of Dramatic Poesy*, Ker, I, 33.
75. Preface to *All for Love*, Ker, I, 195.
76. *History of the Royal Society*, p. 40.
77. Spingarn, *op. cit.*, II, 298.
78. *Parallèle des anciens et des modernes en ce qui regarde les arts et les sciences*, II, 48-49.
79. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
80. *Oeuvres de Saint-Évremond*, I, 280.
81. *Ibid.*
82. *Ibid.*, p. 231.
83. *The Mirrour of Mindes or Barclay's Icon Animorum* (Englished by T. M., 1631), p. 70.
84. *The History of the Royal Society*, p. 144.
85. Ker, *op. cit.*, I, 85.
86. Swift, "The Intelligencer" (No. 3, 1728), cited by F. W. Hadley, *The Theory of Milieu in English Criticism from 1660 to 1801*, MS diss. (Chicago, 1925), p. 122.
87. William Congreve, *Concerning Humour in Comedy* (1695), Spingarn, III, 252.
88. George Farquhar, *Discourse upon Comedy* (1702), Durham, p. 275.
89. *The Guardian* (London, 1714), No. 144.
90. *The Gentleman's Magazine*, March, 1732, cited by Hadley, p. 118
- Corbyn Morris, *Of Wit, Humour, Raillery, Satire and Ridicule* (London, 1744), pp. 12 ff.
- Edward Young, *Conjectures on Original Composition* (London, 1918), pp. 33-34.

APPENDIX

1. *Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands*, written and published in 1673
2. Lady Giffard, "Life and Character of Sir William Temple, by a Particular Friend," prefixed to *The Works of Sir William Temple* (London, 1754), Vol. I
3. *Select Letters*, 60, quoted by Courtenay, I, 380.
4. *Works*, I, 425-426.
5. *Miscellanea* (London, 1680).
6. There is an announcement of Part One of the *Miscellanea* for November, 1679, in Arber's *Term Catalogues*, I, 374.
7. "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning," *Works*, II, 142. The French book referred to is, of course, Fontenelle's *Plurclité des Mondes*, which had appeared in 1686, and therefore does not date the essay.
8. *Works*, II, 172.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 226.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 317.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 245.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 290.
14. For detailed discussion see pp. 178-180.
15. Swift was in Ireland from 1694 to 1696. Also Temple refers in this essay to his earlier essay on the same subject written "about five or six years ago" (*Works*, II, 432), which would indicate that the date of this essay was 1694 or 1695.
16. *Miscellanea*, The Third Part (London, 1701), "The Publisher to the Reader."
17. Part I of the *Memoirs* was thrown into the fire by Temple before his death. An "unauthorized edition" of Part II appeared in 1692 Swift republished it in 1709. Part III was printed for the first time in 1709.
18. Letter from Swift to Lady Giffard (Nov. 10, 1709), published by T. P. Courtenay, *Memoirs of the Life, Works and Correspondence of Sir William Temple* (London, 1836), II, 243-245.

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